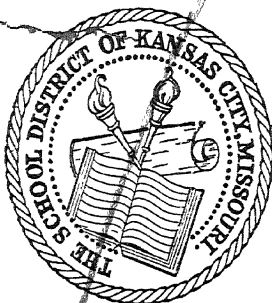


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N.B.C.
Great Plays
Blevins Davis

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National Broadcasting Company
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GREAT PLAYS



STUDY MANUAL—PART II

The "Great Plays" manual, written by Blevins Davis, has been prepared for the radio audience as an aid to the appreciation of the dramatic masterpieces which will be broadcast each week over WJZ and associated stations of the National Broadcasting Company at 1 P.M., E.S.T., on Sundays from October 16 to May 7.

For reading material on each play please consult your local library.

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REGISTERED

“Great Plays”

SECOND SERIES OF IMPORTANT NBC EDUCATIONAL FEATURE BOOKED FOR
1938-1939 SEASON

The opening production of the Second Series of “Great Plays” which the National Broadcasting Company planned for the 1938-1939 season was presented on October 16, 1938. To launch the program “The Trojan Women” by Euripides was broadcast, the first in the list of famous plays selected to show the development of drama from the sunrise performances in ancient Athens down to the contemporary theatre.

Now, after twelve weeks, the heroic theme music, followed by the Announcer’s voice calling out . . . “Great Plays!”, has become familiar to a vast radio audience. Mr. Burns Mantle, outstanding American drama critic, commentator for the “fellow playgoers” who listen each Sunday, has established the fact that “the drama always has been a vital and moving force in portraying the life of a people. Since the rites of the Druids and the theatres of the Greeks, this medium of cultural expression—‘holding the mirror up to Nature,’ as it were—has enriched the cultural life of the world. Before the advent of radio, presentations of dramatic works were limited to the few who could gather to see them in theatre, chautauqua tent, or showboat. But today, through the magic of radio and its development under the American system, drama has come to be a vital force in almost thirty million homes throughout this land.”

Enthusiastic response has followed each broadcast of the “Great Plays.” A nationwide committee, whose

membership in each state includes teachers of drama in college and high school, school officials, officers of the National Congress of Parents and Teachers, and Little Theatre organizations, conducts study courses devoted to the play preceding each broadcast.

The American Library Association is assisting the National Broadcasting Company in furnishing all libraries on the association's mailing list with material relating to the "Great Plays" and reading lists in connection with the dramas. Listeners can therefore secure a copy of a play before or after hearing it by applying to their public, school, or college libraries. These "Great Plays" will be the chief works of representative dramatists whose masterpieces caused the spotlight of the theatre world to be turned on their respective countries, Greece, Italy, England, France, Germany, Spain, Norway, Russia, Belgium, Ireland, Scotland, and America.

Faith Holmes Hyers, Chairman of the Radio Committee for the American Library Association, comments editorially:

"Great drama has its chance to become as popular and as much loved as great music through programs outlined by the National Broadcasting Company. Such recognition of the power and entertainment to be found in classic and modern drama, spread over the listening groups of a great network, cannot fail to result in a rebirth of stage plays, the stimulation of little theatre groups, and the forming of the play-reading habit."

Miss Katharine Cornell has commended the plans and written as follows:

"I was delighted to hear that the National Broadcasting Company will present a dramatic series to be called 'Great Plays'. This plan should be of inestimable value not only to the theatre itself but to all drama lovers, and the results should, I believe, be com-

parable to the great success that has followed Mr. Walter Damrosch's pioneering efforts in behalf of music. Aside from its educational and cultural advantages this series should provide entertainment of the highest sort. I send you my heartiest good wishes for a great success."

This manual, which gives briefly the historic background of each play, the plot, a sketch of the author's life, facts about the premiere of the production and estimates of the drama by noted authorities, will aid the radio listener in his appreciation of the programs.

The plan approved for study in schools is as follows: The plays to be broadcast will be placed on the suggested reading lists in various school departments, a bibliography will be posted as reference material covering each play. Students will be asked to listen to each broadcast and hand to their instructors a brief summary of drama appreciation. These papers will then be sent to NBC where a complete record of the audience response will be thoroughly evaluated. The National Broadcasting Company will welcome letters regarding this program.

Dr. James Rowland Angell, educational counsellor of the National Broadcasting Company, in a recent statement, said, "A great deal has been done to further the appreciation and study of music and we feel that the same opportunity should be offered to students and patrons of the theatre. The new series of great plays will parallel courses taught in departments of drama in high schools and colleges. There is an ever increasing demand for the classics which have made theatrical history and we believe that Great Plays will satisfy in a large measure the desires of a theatre-going public which today does not have the opportunity of seeing the masterpieces which were formerly presented by professional companies on cross-country tours."

The plays broadcast in the First Part of the current

series included Euripides' *The Trojan Women*; *Everyman*; *The Great Magician*, a Commedia dell' Arte; Marlowe's *Dr. Faustus*; Shakespeare's *A Midsummer-Night's Dream*, *Julius Caesar*, and *Othello*; Corneille's *The Cid*; Calderon's *Life Is A Dream*; Molière's *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme*; Goldsmith's *She Stoops To Conquer*; Sheridan's *The School for Scandal*.

The plays which will be broadcast in the Second Part of the current "Great Plays" Series are as follows:

SUNDAY AFTERNOON — BLUE NETWORK —
1:00-2:00 P.M., EST

<i>Broadcast Date</i>	<i>Title of Play</i>	<i>Author</i>
January 22	Mary Stuart	Schiller
January 29	Hernani	Hugo
February 5	Richelieu	Lytton
February 12	The Octoroon	Boucicault
February 19	Redemption	Tolstoy
February 26	A Doll's House	Ibsen
March 5	Patience	Gilbert-Sullivan
March 12	Camille	Dumas fils
March 19	Cyrano de Bergerac	Rostand
March 28	Peter Pan	Barrie
April 2	The Blue Bird	Maeterlinck
April 9	Justice	Galsworthy
April 16	Back to Methuselah	Shaw
April 23	Oliver Cromwell	Drinkwater
April 30	The White Headed Boy	Robinson
May 7	Elizabeth the Queen	Anderson

All correspondence pertaining to the "Great Plays" series should be addressed to: BLEVINS DAVIS, "Great Plays" Series, National Broadcasting Company, Inc., 30 Rockefeller Plaza, New York City, N. Y.

THE HISTORY OF THE DRAMA

PART I AND II

(Prepared in the office of the Reader's Adviser of the
New York Public Library)

PART I.

Nicoll, Allardyce

Development of the Theatre—study of theatrical art from the beginning to the present. London, Har-
rap & Co., 1927-37. *History of the stage, profusely
illustrated.*

Cheyney, Sheldon

The Theatre; 3000 years of drama, acting and stage-
craft. Longmans, Green & Co., 1929.

*Written with freshness and enthusiasm and cover-
ing an enormous amount of material, on acting,
stagecraft and play writing.*

Bellinger, Mrs. M. I.

Short History of Drama. Henry Holt & Co., 1927.

*A sober, rather brief account of the drama from
Aeschylus to O'Neill, aims to offer a narrative of
the history of the art, to supply a handy reference
book for teachers, and to offer helpful criticism.*

Stuart, Donald Clive

Development of Dramatic Art. D. Appleton-Century
Co., 1928.

*Discussion of dramatists and dramas that have in-
fluenced the development of dramatic from Aeschy-
lus to O'Neill.*

Mantzius, Karl

A History of Theatrical Art. 6 vols. J. B. Lippincott
Co., 1903-21.

A monumental work, excellent for reference.

Sketches the events behind the drama's development.

Gilder, Rosamond

Theatre Library: a bibliography of 100 books relating to the theatre. Theatre Arts, Inc., 1932.

An annotated list of modern books which might serve as a reading guide for the student of the theatre.

Hamilton, Edith

Three Greek Plays—Prometheus Bound, Agamemnon, The Trojan Women. W. W. Norton & Co., 1937.

In an introduction the author discusses the difficulties of translating Greek and gives examples of various types of translation. She follows with a brief introduction to each of the three plays which are translated in verse. A useful introduction to Greek drama.

Smith, Logan P.

On Reading Shakespeare. Harcourt, Grace & Co., 1933.

A brief essay on the reasons for and against Shakespeare. The first chapter written in a satiric vein, questions the importance of Shakespeare and bemoans the amount of higher criticism written about him; but the greater portion of the book discusses the delight to be gained in reading his works.

Wilson, John D.

Essential Shakespeare: a biographical adventure. The Macmillan Co., 1932.

A noted Shakespeare editor presents a new interpretation.

Neilson, William A. and

Ashley H. Thorndike

Facts about Shakespeare. The Macmillan Co., 1931.

Summary of all essential information on Shakespeare's life with a discussion of his times, the evolution of the drama, editions of his plays and criticism.

PART II.

Morgan, A. E.

Tendencies of Modern English Drama. London: Constable & Co., 1924.

Includes among others Pinero, Shaw, Galsworthy, Barrie, Robinson.

Eaton, Walter Prichard

Drama in English. Charles Scribner's Sons, 1930.

Contains analyses of plays by Shaw, Galsworthy, Barrie and Fitch. Special attention is given to the theatre, the audience and the spirit of the times.

Brown, John Mason

Modern Theatre in Revolt. W. W. Norton & Co., 1929.

Short account of the various revolutions that have taken place in the theatre in the last hundred years beginning with Romantic movement in France.

Brown, John Mason

Letters from the Greenroom Ghosts. The Viking Press, 1935.

Letters from a few of the theatre's illustrious dead to living actors and playwrights—containing some shrewd criticism.

Smith, Hugh A.

Main Currents of Modern French Drama. Henry Holt & Co., 1925.

Rostand, Dumas fils, Maeterlinck. Stress laid on main currents in development of French drama.

Clark, Barrett H.

Maxwell Anderson; the man and his plays. Samuel French, 1933.

A booklet containing biographical material and discussions of individual plays.

Pearson, Hesketh

Gilbert and Sullivan. Harper & Bros., 1935.

A readable account of the times and personalities of the famous collaborators.

Quinn, Arthur H.

Representative American Plays from 1767 to the Present Day. D. Appleton-Century Company, 1930.

Each play preceded by introduction including a bibliography. Includes "The Octoroon" by Boucicault.

Matthews, Brander

Chief European Dramatists. Houghton, Mifflin Co., 1916.

Collection of translations of plays from Aeschylus to Ibsen; brief biographies and critical notes included.

Moses, Montrose J. ed.

British Plays from the Restoration to 1820. 2 v. Little, Brown & Co., 1929.

Introduction to the plays contains interesting biographical and critical material.

* * * * *

VALUABLE TEXTS FOR STUDY OF DRAMA

"Minute History of Drama" (From its earliest beginnings to the present day). By Alice Buchanan Fort and Herbert S. Kates. This volume, published by Grosset and Dunlap of New York, gives a short summary and sketch of author's life and outstanding plays in the development of drama.

Adams: "Shakespearean Playhouses"
Americana Encyclopedia

Allen:	"Stage Antiquities of the Greeks and Romans and Their Influence"
Bagley:	"An Introduction to French Literature" "French Literature of the Seventeenth Century"
Baker:	"History of the London Stage"
Bakeless:	"Marlowe The Man In His Time"
Besant:	"The French Humorists" "Life of Molière"
Black:	"Oliver Goldsmith"
Boas:	"Shakespeare and His Predecessors"
Bradley:	"Shakespearean Tragedy"
Britannica Encyclopedia	
Chatfield-Taylor:	"Molière"
Child:	"The Second Shepherd's Play, Everyman, and Other Plays"
Clark:	"The Miracle Play In England"
Dobson:	"The Life of Goldsmith"
Dowden:	"Shakespeare"
Drew:	"Discovering Drama"
Ducharte:	"The Italian Comedy"
Ellis:	"Christopher Marlowe"
Fleming:	"Shakespeare's Plots"
Flickinger:	"The Greek Theatre and Its Drama"
Foster:	"Life and Times of Oliver Goldsmith"
Guizot:	"Corneille and His Times"
Hamilton:	"The Greek Way"
Harvard Classics	
Hasell:	"Calderon"
Hibbert:	"Everyman"
Irving:	"Oliver Goldsmith"
Hunt:	"Richard Brinsley Sheridan"
Jenks:	"In the Day of Goldsmith"

Lewes:	"The Spanish Drama"
Livingstone:	"The Pageant of Greece"
Lowell:	"English Dramatists"
Mac-Carthy:	"Calderon's Dramas"
MacKenzie:	"Origin of the English Morality"
Matthews:	"Molière His Life and His Work"
Moore:	"Life of Oliver Goldsmith"
Nicoll:	"Masks, Mimes, and Miracles"
Palmer:	"Molière"
Phelps:	"Christopher Marlowe"
Pollard:	"English Miracle Plays"
Rolfe:	"Life of William Shakespeare"
Sainte-Beuve:	"Portraits of the Seventeenth Century"
Sanford:	"The Stage In The Attic Theatre"
Smith, Winifred:	"The Commedia dell' Arte"
Stevens:	"The Greek Spirit"
Symonds:	"Christopher Marlowe"
Thompson:	"The English Moral Plays"
Thorndike:	"Shakespeare's Theatre"
Trollope:	"Life of Molière"
Vincente:	"Corneille"

* * * * *

PART II. ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.

*Mr. Thomas Seller, Graduate Student Department of
Drama, Yale University, for valuable assistance
in research.*

Schiller

Carlyle, Thomas:	"Life of Frederick Schiller"
Duentzer, Heinrich:	"Life of Frederick Schiller"
Francke, Kuno:	"History of German Literature"
Nevinson, Henry W.:	"Life of Frederick Schiller"
Scherer, W.:	"History of German Literature"
Thomas, Calvin:	"Life and Works of Schiller"

Hugo

- Davidson, R.: "Victor Hugo"
Escholier, A.: "Victor Hugo"
Marzials, Frank T.: "The Life of Victor Hugo"
Matthews, Brander: "Victor Hugo"

Bulwer-Lytton

- Goodrich, Arthur: "Richelieu"
Hamilton, Clayton: "Introduction to Richelieu"
Jackson, Holbrook: "Great English Novelists"

Boucicault

- O'Dell, George: "Annals of the American Stage"
Quinn, Arthur H.: "History of American Drama"
Walsh, Townsend: "The Career of Dion Boucicault"

Tolstoy

- Dole, N. H.: "The Life of Lyof N. Tolstoi"
Ellis, Havelock: "The New Spirit"
Hall, Bolton: "What Tolstoy Taught"
Kenworthy, J. C.: "Tolstoy His Life and His Works"
Knowlson, T. S.: "Leo Tolstoy"
Maude, Aylmer: "Leo Tolstoy"
Noyes, G. R.: "Tolstoy"
Stockham, A. B.: "Tolstoy A Man of Peace"

Ibsen

- Boyesen, J.: "Commentary on Works of
Henrick Ibsen"
Franc, M. A.: "Ibsen in England"
Gosse, Edmund: "Ibsen"
Heller, Otto: "Henrik Ibsen Plays and
Problems"
Moses, M. J.: "Henrik Ibsen The Man and His
Plays"

Gilbert and Sullivan

- Dunhill, Thomas F.: "Gilbert and Sullivan's Comic Operas"
Fitzgerald, Percy: "The Operas of Gilbert and Sullivan"
Goldberg, Isaac: "Story of Gilbert and Sullivan"
Walbrook, H. M.: "Gilbert and Sullivan Opera"

Dumas

- Gosse, Edmund: "The Lady of the Camellias"
Gribble, Francis: "Dumas Father and Son"
Schwarz: "Alexander Dumas, fils"
Taylor, F. A.: "The Theatre of Dumas Fils"

Rostand

- Hale, E. V. Jr.: "Dramatists of Today"
Hooker, Brian: "Cyrano de Bergerac"
Phelps, W. L.: "Essays on Dramatists"
Ryland, Hobart: "Sources of the Play 'Cyrano de Bergerac' "

Barrie

- Roy, J. A.: "James Matthew Barrie; An Appreciation"
Phelps, W. L.: "Essays on Modern Dramatists"
Moult, Thomas: "Barrie"
Braybrooke, Patrick: "J. M. Barrie; A Study in Fairies and Mortals"

Maeterlinck

- Bithell, Jethro: "Life and Writings of Maurice Maeterlinck"
Clark, Macdonald: "Maurice Maeterlinck, Poet and Philosopher"
Ellehauge, Martin: "Striking Figures Among Modern English Dramatists"
Fidler, Florence: "The Bird That Is Blue"

Galsworthy

- Coats, R. H.: "John Galsworthy as a Dramatic Artist"
Ford, F. M.: "Mightier Than The Sword"
Galsworthy, Ada: "Over the Hills and Far Away"
Marrot, H. V.: "The Life and Letters of John Galsworthy"

Shaw

- Harris, Frank: "Bernard Shaw"
Henderson, A.: "Bernard Shaw, Playboy and Prophet"
Henderson, A.: "George Bernard Shaw. His Life and Works"
Shaw, Bernard: "Prefaces"

Drinkwater

- Drinkwater, John: "Inheritance"
Drinkwater, John: "Discovery"
Ellehauge, Martin: "Striking Figures Among Modern English Dramatists"
Ghidelli, Carmen: "John Drinkwater and His Historical Plays"

Robinson

- Fay, W. G., and
Carswell, Catherine: "The Fays of the Abbey Theatre"
O'Connor, J. N.: "A Dramatist of Changing Ireland"
Nicoll, Allardyce: "British Drama"

Anderson

- Clark, Barrett H.: "Maxwell Anderson, the Man and His Plays"
Anderson, Maxwell: "The American Theatre", in "Modern Monthly"
Mantle, Burns: "Contemporary American Playwrights"

- "Treasury of the Theatre", Burns Mantle and John Gassner
"Living Authors, A Book of Biographies", S. J. Kunitz
"The Continental Drama of Today", Barrett H. Clark
"The British and American Drama of Today", Barrett H. Clark
"Aspects of Modern Drama", Frank W. Chandler
"Authors Today and Yesterday", S. J. Kunitz
"A Prelude to Poetry in the Theatre", in "Winterset", Maxwell Anderson

* * * * *

GENERAL QUESTIONS FOR STUDY GROUPS

1. How does the play reflect the age in which it was written?
2. Discuss the personal characteristics of the leading characters.
3. Of what value is a commentator in a radio production?
4. What purpose is served by a musical background in a broadcast?
5. In your opinion did the plot "come over" clearly?
6. Was there an element of "theatricality" in the production? Did the sequences build to a successful climax?
7. What are the primary elements, as demonstrated by this series, which constitute the difference between "tragedy" and "comedy"?
8. What are the advantages of "radio" drama over "stage" or "motion picture" drama?
9. To what extent, if any, does the play reflect the author's life?
10. What sound effects were of particular interest?

11. In what specific places would you suggest changes or additions of sound effects?
12. What voice qualities of specific characters were most effective?
13. Were there any scenes omitted in the radio version which you would have included?
14. Write a brief newspaper account from the standpoint of a "radio editor" who is reviewing the broadcast for his readers.
15. How effectively was the setting established by the commentator and the actors?
16. What do we mean by "period" drama?
17. How contemporary did the play seem to be?
18. What other play by the same author would make a good radio broadcast?
19. What were the advantages or disadvantages of the "prose" plays as opposed to the "poetic" plays?
20. Compare this play to any motion picture you have seen on the same theme.
21. Would a stage version of the play be of interest to the student body?
22. Write a paragraph briefly stating points of interest in the author's life. Could a play be written on the author's life?
23. Who in our modern life might be classed as a counterpart of the leading characters in the play?
24. Could the episodes portrayed in the drama actually occur?
25. Which play in the entire series did you enjoy the most?

Mary Stuart

By *Frederick Schiller*. Produced June 14,

1801. Number XIII.

THE year 1759 marked the turn of literary style in Germany and was the beginning of an age of modern classical writing. Lessing published his "Letters on Literature" which liberated German letters and poetry from the confines which had stifled progress for so many years. Rousseau, in France, was completing his "Nouvelle Heloïse" which influenced the thought of German as well as French culture. At the very beginning of this new age Frederick Schiller was born, on the 10th of November 1759, in Marbach which is situated in one of the choicest valleys leading into the Rhine district. Schiller's father, an army doctor, in the services of the Duke of Wurtemberg, had served in the Netherlands. During his participation in the Seven Years War his wife visited with her parents and it was in their home, "The Golden Horn", that the young genius, Frederick Schiller, was born.

Undoubtedly one of the gayest of all European courts was that of Karl Eugene, Duke of Wurtemberg, who established his residence at Ludwigsburg which was comparable to the grandure of Versailles. Here the Schiller family resided. In 1778 the Duke founded his famous military academy, "The Solitude", and Frederick was forced to enter its rigid training in the field of law which he soon abandoned for the study of medicine. In such surroundings and under excellent teachers Schiller soon became engrossed in literature. At the age of twenty he received an appointment as an army surgeon

in Stuttgart with an average salary of about one hundred dollars a year.

Redoubling his efforts to carry out his literary projects he completed his first play "The Robbers", paid to have it printed in July 1781, and produced it on January 13, 1782, before a fashionable and cultured audience. The Duke took exception to the subject matter and forbade Schiller to write any more plays, with the result that the young dramatist fled to Mannheim. In that new retreat he wrote "Fiesco", and "Plot and Passion", after which he was appointed playwright for the Mannheim Theatre at two hundred and fifty dollars per year.

One resounding note—that of the struggle for freedom—rings throughout the work of the new playwright. Nevins in his "Life of Frederick Schiller" says: "In 'The Robbers' we have heroic revolt against the limitations of everyday morality.

"The brooding spirit of dissatisfaction and revolt had found a voice; and there was in 'The Robbers' an appeal to the deeper nature of man, to the grander impulses of youth, an appeal that seldom fails when a sceptical and artificial age is breaking up of its own avidity.

"It was due to 'The Robbers', and these other early plays, that Schiller was first recognized as an apostle of liberty and revolt even outside the boundaries of Germany."

This drama when presented before the king received such tremendous applause and approval that critics hailed Schiller as the Shakespeare of Germany. From Weimar Schiller moved to Jena, where he was recognized as a great force in contemporary literature. His lectures at the university were greeted with great enthusiasm. In February 1790, he married Lotte Lengenfeld, a union which was extremely happy and successful. Poetry caught his fancy and here, again, Schiller proved

a master in that particular field. Soon followed the tragedy of "Wallenstein's Death", presented in three parts on three successive evenings and acclaimed by some as "the grandest national drama that Germany has yet produced!" Untiring in his efforts the author started his research work on "Mary Stuart" the day following the premiere of Wallenstein's Death."

The year 1799 found Schiller residing in one of the ducal palaces at Weimar—and hard at work on "Mary Stuart". In April he wrote to Goethe, his great friend and confidant, "I have turned my attention to a political episode in Queen Elizabeth's reign and have begun to study the trial of Mary Stuart. One or two first-rate tragic motives suggested themselves straightway, and these have given me great faith in the subject, which incontestably has much to recommend it. It seems to be especially adapted to Euripidean method, which consists in the completest possible development of a situation; for I see a possibility of making a side out of the trial, and beginning the tragedy directly with the condemnation."

Many visitors and a special performance of "Wallenstein" for the King and Queen of Prussia hindered the progress of the writing. By July 24th the first act was completed; by September 3rd he had reached the great scene between Mary and Elizabeth. At this point he laid the work aside and wrote the "Song of the Bell". By the middle of December he had completed the third act; by October 11, 1800, the fourth act; and by the first week in November the last act was ready for rehearsal.

The setting of "Mary Stuart" takes place for the most part at Fotheringhay. Mary of Scotland has been summoned before an English tribunal because Elizabeth fears her as a rival and causes Mortimer, who saw in Mary a "queen of beauty", to utter a truth when he said

to her: "Your undoubted right to England's throne has been your only wrong." Mary staunchly defends her innocence of any crime, and when we see her it is an unforgettable picture of the last three days of her life.

Calvin Thomas in his "Life and Works of Schiller", points out that the playwright has three unhistorical inventions:

1. "An attempt to escape, in which Mary and her cause would become involved in the guilt of the murderous fanatic, Mortimer; . . .
2. "A supposititious love for Leicester, who would use his influence with Elizabeth to bring about a meeting of the two queens;
3. "The meeting itself, in which Mary's long pent-up passion would get the better of her and betray her into a deadly insult of her rival. After this her fate would appear inevitable and incurred by her own act. This concentration of the action brought with it certain other departures from history which are of minor importance."

The dialogue has many fine qualities and the beauty of it enhances such exquisite scenes as the first entrance of Mary when she beholds the clouds in the sky, for the first time after her imprisonment, and bids them carry news of her to other lands. Certainly there is no thought in the doomed queen's mind of using this brief freedom for political ends for here is a tortured soul living terrible moments and cherishing fleeting seconds of physical liberty. We hold high hope for Mary but this vanishes instantly with the entrance of Elizabeth. In the meeting of the two queens we accept the fact that what Mary has done for political power has been through

the passion of a moment and not an act cruelly planned with the calculating sureness so characteristic of Elizabeth. The cruelty, hatred, and crushing force of Elizabeth serves to heighten our sympathies for the lonely, ill-fated Mary. In the delineation of the characters of the two queens, Schiller has painted great portraits which reveal the dominant characteristics of these immortal women of history.

In "Mary Stuart", the idea, character, analysis, and plot, are developed perhaps with more finesse than in any of Schiller's other plays. This fine workmanship prompted Madam de Staël to call the drama "the best conceived, as well as the most pathetic of German tragedies."



Hernani

By *Victor Hugo*. Produced Feb. 25, 1830.

Number XIV.

THE theatre of France was ready for a great renaissance during the Nineteenth Century. Molière, Corneille, and Racine influenced the ages in which they had lived; the plays of Shakespeare had been produced in Paris and were in no small measure responsible for the turn of events; the "classic" forms of the past were discarded and the French dramatists of a new "romantic" school of expression fought for their ideas and ideals; Dumas blazed the trail with his vital "Henry II", and Victor Hugo carried the cause of the daring new playwrights to victory with "Hernani" because he and his group would no longer accept the tenets of his neo-classic predecessors. Because of Hugo's gallant stand he was acclaimed as a "genius" and despised as a "radical" by the divided general public with its diversity of opinion. His loyal followers under the banners of "romanticists" fought every inch of the way to overcome their "classicist" adversaries.

Hugo was well trained for this literary battle which lasted for sixty years of his life. His father was a colonel in the French army and made it possible for his gifted son to receive a classical education. At the age of twelve Hugo had written verses of merit and at the age of twenty his "Odes and Ballads" was published. The following year his first novel appeared. Hugo, in 1827, branching into other fields completed "Cromwell", a play which instantly placed him as undisputed leader of the new romantic movement. On June 24, 1829, he

finished "Marion de Lorme" which had been sought for production by the most important theatrical organizations in Paris. Because of the author's attacks upon the Bourbons the government would not permit the production. Hugo took the matter to the King who staunchly supported the decision of his ministers and, as a friendly gesture, offered to increase Hugo's pension 2,000 francs. Hugo refused most humbly to accept and as a result gained tremendous respect throughout France. Undaunted by his defeat Hugo started his drama "Hernani" on August 29 and in a month's time placed it before the reading committee of the Théâtre Français. This great play, "Hernani", in 1830 launched the stormy conflict of "romanticism" versus "classicism" in French drama. While absorbed in writing his other important plays, "The King Amuses Himself", "Lucrecia Borgia", and "Ruy Blas", he also wrote several books of poetry and a novel, "Notre Dame de Paris". In 1841 he was elected to the Academy; in 1845 Louis Philippe raised him to the peerage; in 1848 he found himself a part of the revolution; and in 1849 he was the Peace Conference's president. His democratic alliances then led to his exile in Brussels, where in 1852 he wrote his bitter satire "The Little Napoleon"; thence to Jersey where he encountered difficulty with the British authorities and from there to Guernsey, refusing the general amnesties issued in 1859 and 1860. During these latter years he wrote "Les Misérables", which appeared in ten languages on the same day; "The Toilers of the Sea"; and "The Man Who Laughs". In 1870 he returned to Paris, served in the national assembly; left for Brussels where he was expelled for political views; returned to Paris in 1876 and served as a Senator for six years. Hugo died May 22, 1885, and was buried in the Pantheon after a State funeral.

Hugo's life was thrilling and full of adventure but nothing in his long career climaxed the presentation of "Hernani". Preparations for the premiere were far from peaceful. The weather was terribly cold, friction between the actors, the spying of the police and newspapermen, overwhelmed the master playwright. Mlle. Mars, the great tragic actress, was cast in the leading feminine role of Dona Sol. She exasperated Hugo by stopping rehearsals, suggested new lines and situations, and finally forced him to declare he would substitute another actress if she continued to interfere.

Long before the date set for the performance scripts had been stolen, the lines paraphrased and a burlesque version of the drama had preceded the actual premiere. Hugo, meanwhile, rallied his forces from the Latin quarter of Paris. He had met a foe and was determined to conquer it. Young artists, musicians, poets, and dramatists flocked like crusaders to his aid for they felt that the future of French literature was on trial. Free tickets printed on red paper and marked with the Spanish word "hierro" (iron) were given to loyal "romanticists". The battle cry was sounded and by the day of the performance the opening had become an event of national importance.

Gerard de Nerval assumed the role of an officer and recruited the aid of illustrious men like Achille and Eugène Feveria, Louis Boulanger, Théophile Gautier, Emile Deschamps, Petrus Borel, Paul Huet, and Victor Pavie.

By two o'clock the balconies and carefully designated locations in the theatre were occupied by Hugo's "legionnaires" who were ready for any emergency, and primed to greet the production with an ovation. Regarding the opening performance Marzials, in his biography of Victor Hugo says:

"Nor were outward and visible signs of eccentricity wanting in the youthful band that crowded round the door of the pit in the Theatre Francais on the memorable 25th of February, 1830, when "Hernani" was to be first presented to the public. They had been often described. According to Madame Hugo they were 'strange, uncouth, bearded, long-haired, dressed in every manner except according to the existing fashion, in loose jerkins, in Spanish cloaks, in Robespierre waistcoats, in Henry III bonnets, having every century and every country upon their shoulders and heads'. No wonder the peaceful burgesses were stupefied and indignant. Théophile Gautier especially 'insulted their senses. His locks, like those of Albert Dürer, flowed far over his shoulder, and he wore a scarlet satin waistcoat of medieval cut, a black coat with broad velvet facing, trousers of pale sea-green seamed with black velvet, and an ample grey overcoat lined with green satin. As to the scarlet waistcoat, it has a place in history. It flames in the forefront of the romantic battle like the white plume of King Henry of Navarre at Ivry.'"

By six o'clock the theatre was packed and when, at seven, the chandelier with its blazing candles was pulled to its place above the stage three loud knocks resounded through the Théâtre Français and the curtain rose on "Hernani". At that instant a pitched battle raged between the rival groups but the play, in the final analysis, was a complete victory for the "romantic" wing. So successful was the opus that before the first patrons left the playhouse Hugo sold "Hernani" to a publisher for six thousand francs. But the fate of the drama was not settled in a single performance. "The fight was renewed", as Brander Matthews observes, "with the same bitterness at every performance; speeches roughly received one night were rapturously applauded the next; a scene lost

by the Romanticists today was taken by assault tomorrow; until at last there was not a line which, at one time or another, had not been hissed. The theatre was crowded night after night. The excitement was not confined to the capital, and provincial towns echoed the animated discussion of Paris. At Toulouse a quarrel about 'Hernani' led to a duel in which a young man was killed."

In her memoirs of the premiere Madame Hugo says that after the initial performance the real struggle began. "Each performance became an indescribable tumult. The boxes sneered and tittered; the stalls whistled; it became a fashionable pastime to go and laugh at "Hernani". Everyone protested after his own manner, and according to his individual nature. Some, as not being able to bear to look at such a piece, turned their backs to the performance. Others declared aloud that they could stand it no longer, and went out in the middle of the acts, and banged the doors of their boxes as they went. The more peaceable . . . ostentatiously spread out and read their newspapers."

The battle royal at the Theatre Francais was waged for forty-five nights and finally the strain proved too much for the leading actress, Mlle. Mars, who collapsed, and the performances closed on June 18, 1830, a victory for romantic drama on the French stage.

Briefly the plot of "Hernani" is as follows: Hernani, a mysterious bandit, is in love with Doña Sol who in turn is loved by the King of Spain. Ruy Gomez, uncle of Doña Sol, plans to marry her. This difficult triangle of suitors becomes deeply involved. Doña is claimed by the King of Spain; Hernani defies the King and the bandit's life is saved by Ruy Gomez to whom Hernani gives his hunting horn and swears he will commit suicide should Gomez ever sound it; the King after becoming

Emperor pardons Hernani (whom we discover to be the noble Don Juan of Aragon) and awards him the hand of Doña Sol. At the climax of the nuptial celebration Hernani hears the hunting horn and keeps his vow to Ruy Gomez. The inevitable tragedy is further heightened by the death of Doña Sol.



Richelieu

By *Bulwer-Lytton*. Produced March 7,
1839. Number XV.

FOR the past century a play which has delighted audiences in England and America is the familiar "Richelieu" by Bulwer-Lytton. "Richelieu" was written for William Charles Macready and first produced March 7, 1839 at the Theatre Royal, Covent Garden, London. Under his personal direction the play became a marked success and a vehicle destined to be one of the greatest roles in Macready's career. The actor took many liberties with the author's manuscript and altered it for professional stage production. At Bulwer-Lytton's suggestion the acting version, with stage directions, was sent to America to Edwin Forrest who "possessed the peculiar intellectuality and physical powers which were required to completely portray the idealized Cardinal". The American premiere of "Richelieu" was at Wallack's National Theatre in New York City, September 4, 1839 with Forrest in the title role. So impressed was the theatre going public by his performances of the Cardinal that he revived the production for presentation at Niblo's Theatre in 1861, and again the critics said, "He who saw Forrest play Bulwer's "Richelieu" saw the very perfection of the actor's art".

Edwin Booth placed the drama in his repertoire; Lawrence Barrett considered it one of his best roles; Sir Henry Irving played it with distinction; Robert Mantell toured the country in the classic; and Walter Hampden, in a special version of the play by Arthur Goodrich, gave brilliant performances before packed houses wherever the production was staged.

Edward George Earle (First Lord Lytton) was a distinguished novelist, playwright, and politician. He was born in London May 25th, 1803. His long line of illustrious ancestors claimed descent from the Normans and Vikings. His father was a colonel in the 106th Regiment of Norfolk rangers, and his mother, Elizabeth Barbara, was the only daughter of Richard Warburton Lytton. Young Edward attributed his love for letters and books to his mother. At an early age he wrote poems in the mood of Byron, and while a student at Cambridge won high honors for his attainments in literature. As a young man he held a prominent place in Paris and London society, was sought after by fashionable persons, and was hailed as a "dandy".

In the field of playwrighting Bulwer-Lytton gained fame and popular acclaim for "The Lady of Lyons" 1838; "Richelieu" 1838; and "Money", 1840. The versatility of his genius is reflected in his important writings which included "Falkland", a sentimental novel; "Pelham", reminiscent of his life in Paris and London; "Devereaux", "Paul Clifford", "The Pilgrims of the Rhine", and "The Haunted and the Haunters". Following these publications were his famed historical romances, "The Last Days of Pompeii", in 1834; "Rienzi", 1835; "The Last of the Barons", 1843; "Harold", 1848. For his literary efforts he was given the degree of L.L.D. by Oxford and by Cambridge.

These years of activity were not limited to the field of the arts for Bulwer-Lytton was actively engaged in politics from 1831-1841; devoted much time in favor of copyright laws on original works, cheap postage on newspapers, and laws affecting dramatic literature and the stage. He was made Baron Lytton of Knebworth in 1866.

In giving an estimate of Bulwer-Lytton's career, Hol-

brook Jackson, in his "Great English Novelists", says that the author-playwright-statesman was "a literary man of great ability and unequalled variety. His literary output was prodigious, greater than that of any other man of his time; and considering its varied character, of an all-round excellence which in itself is not unlike genius . . . For Edward Bulwer-Lytton wrote novels and tales, histories and poems, essays and dramas, satires, political toasts, and orations, and in every literary form undertaken by him he was distinctive and in many cases eminent. He was a man of immense knowledge, and experienced in affairs and pleasures. Philosopher, historian, oculist, novelist, politician, and dandy; his busy and productive life was an epitome of the active age in which he lived".

The approach to Bulwer-Lytton's "Richelieu" is explained by the author himself in an April 1839 publication of the drama in London: "The administration of Cardinal Richelieu whom (despite all his darker qualities) Voltaire and history justly consider the true architect of the French monarchy and the great parent of French Civilization, is characterized by features alike tragic and comic. A weak king, an ambitious favourite, a despicable conspiracy against the minister, nearly always associated with a dangerous treason against the state; these with little variety of names and dates, constitute the eventful cycle through which, with a dazzling ease and an arrogant confidence, the great luminary fulfilled its destinies. Blended together in startling contrast, we see the gradual achievements and the pettiest agents; the spy, the mistress, the Capuchin; the destruction of feudalism; the humiliation of Austria; the dismemberment of Spain. Richelieu himself is still what he was in his own day, a man of two characters. If, on the one hand he is justly represented as inflexible and

vindictive, crafty and unscrupulous; so, on the other, it cannot be denied that he was placed in times in which the long impunity of every license required stern examples; that he was beset by perils and intrigues, which gave a certain excuse to the subtlest invention of self-defence; that his ambition was inseparably connected with a passionate love for the glory of his country; and that, if he was her dictator, he was not less her benefactor. It has been fairly remarked by the most impartial historians, that he was no less generous to merit than severe to crime; that, in various departments of the state, the army and the church, he selected and distinguished the ablest aspirants; that the wars which he conducted were, for the most part, essential to the preservation of France, and Europe itself, from the formidable encroachments of the Austrian house; that, in spite of those wars, the people were not oppressed with exorbitant imposts; and that he left the kingdom he had governed in a more flourishing and vigorous state than at any former period of the French history, or at the decease of Louis XIV.

“The cabals formed against the great statesmen were not carried on by the patriotism of public virtue or the emulation of equal talent; they were but court struggles, in which the most worthless agents had recourse to the most desperate means.

“In each, as I have before observed, we see the twofold attempt to murder the minister and to betray the country. Such then, are the agents, and such the designs, with which truth, in the drama as in history, requires us to contrast the celebrated Cardinal; not disguising his foibles or his vices, but not unjust to the grander qualities (especially the love of country) by which they were often dignified, and, at times, redeemed.

“The historical drama is the concentration of historical events. In the attempt to place upon the stage the

picture of an era, that license with dates and details which poetry permits, and which the highest authorities in the drama of France herself has sanctioned, has been, though not unsparingly, indulged. The conspiracy of the Duc de Bouillon is, for instance, amalgamated with the dénouement of "The Day of Dupes"; and circumstances connected with the treason of Cinq Mars (whose brilliant youth and gloomy catastrophe tend to subvert poetic and historic justice, by seducing us to forget his base ingratitude and his perfidious apostasy) are identified with the fate of the earlier favourite Baradas, whose sudden rise and as sudden fall passed into a proverb. I ought to add, that the noble romance of Cinq Mars suggested one of the scenes in the 5th Act; and that for the conception of some portion of the intrigue connected with de Mauprat and Julie; I am with great alterations of incident, and considerable, if not entire reconstruction of character, indebted to an early and admirable novel by the author of "Picciola".



The Octoroon

By *Dion Boucicault*. Produced Dec. 5,
1859. Number XVI.

NO survey of drama which embraced the English and American stage would be complete without mention of the Irish playwright-actor-producer—Dion Boucicault.

Townsend Walsh points out that "For a period of fifty years Dion Boucicault stood prominent in the world of the stage. He fed half the theatres of London and New York with the products of his pen. He vitalized everything he read in novels, and adapted everything he saw in the Paris theatres. His enormous capacity for work equalled his superabundant activity. His gift of discerning what the public wanted was matched by his inexhaustible facility in supplying that want, a man dowered to a high degree with all the attributes that go to make a masterful playwright.

"Boucicault's talent was a remarkable commodity. His earliest work proved his inborn theatrical instinct and brought him revenue and glory. Before he was twenty he had caught the trick of playwrighting with facile elegance, and his dramatic labor for half a century covers every species of stage literature.

"Posterity seems to have practically decided that his Irish plays are the achievements upon which Boucicault's fame will ultimately rest. One of the most remarkable personalities in the history of the theatre, he was one of the most versatile; his range was of the widest, and he succeeded in every department of the realm of the stage; but it was as an actor of Irish parts and as a writer of

Irish plays that he gained a place in the dramatic hierarchy."

While writing these plays he became so imbued with patriotism that he entered into a political controversy with Lord Beaconsfield over the rights and liberties of the Irish people.

Dion Boucicault was born December 22, 1822, in Dublin. He was educated in London and wrote his first play, "London Assurance", when he was only nineteen years old. This work, produced in Covent Garden, was a tremendous success. At the age of thirty he made his first appearance as an actor in "The Vampire", his own play.

Boucicault lived in France from 1844 to 1848 and then came to New York in September 1853 with his actress-wife Agnes Robertson. The following years brought him pronounced success throughout the United States. His initial production of importance was in New Orleans in 1855 where he presented "Grimaldi, Or the Life of An Actress". His featured players were himself, his wife, Mr. and Mrs. E. A. Sothern, and J. G. Burnett.

The works of Charles Dickens attracted Boucicault and he adapted "Cricket On the Hearth", which he presented at the Winter Garden on September 14, 1859. In November of the same year he produced "Nicholas Nickleby".

Boucicault arrived in the United States at an opportune time. Ever on the alert for dramatic situations he realized that in the slavery question, which was dividing the nation, was to be found material for a successful drama. Many people avoided the issue but Boucicault found his theme in a novel, "The Quadroon", by Mayne Reid which had been published in 1856 in New York and produced in play form at the City of London Theatre. When he announced the opening of his vehicle under

the title of "The Octoroon" Boucicault added fuel to the fire but was clever enough to present a drama which championed the cause of both the supporters of slavery and of the abolitionists.

The premiere of "The Octoroon" was at the Winter Garden, New York City, on December 5, 1859, and the playbills of the day carried the statement: "Nothing extenuate, nor aught set down in malice". The very title of the play was a firebrand for the imagination of a tense public. The plot, which centered around the Octoroon daughter of a quadroon slave by her white owner, is filled with emotional content and first rate melodrama.

The daring plot reveals the offering for sale of Zoe, the Octoroon, who is in love with a young white man. Beliefs identified with the social and political life of both the North and the South find expression in the slave traders, the rich planters, and the slaves themselves. The non-committal attitude which Boucicault took in his play gave rise to prolonged and furious arguments. Joseph Jefferson in his "Autobiography" points out specific scenes and situations and adds that "when the old negro, just before the slave sale, calls his colored 'bredrin' around him and tells them they must look their best so as to bring a good price for the 'missus', and then falling on his knees asks a blessing on the family who has been so kind to them, the language drew further sympathy for the loving hearts of the South; but when they felt by the action of the play that the old darky who had made them weep was a slave, they became abolitionists to a man.

"When Zoe, the loving Octoroon, is offered to the highest bidder, and a warm hearted Southern girl offers all her fortune to buy Zoe, and release her from the threatened bondage—the audience cheered for the South; but when again the action revealed that she could

be bartered for, and was bought and sold, they cheered for the North, as plainly as though they had said "Down with slavery!"

The cast for the New York production was as follows:

Mrs. Peyton	<i>Mr. W. R. Blake</i>
George Peyton . . .	<i>Mr. A. H. Davenport</i>
Jacob McClosky . .	<i>Mr. T. B. Johnston</i>
Salem Scudder . .	<i>Mr. Joseph Jefferson</i>
Zoe	<i>Miss Agnes Robertson</i>
Sunnyside	<i>Mr. George Holland</i>
Dora Sunnyside . .	<i>Mrs. J. H. Allen</i>
Lafouche	<i>Mr. J. H. Stoddard</i>
Wah-no-tee	<i>Mr. Dion Boucicault</i>
Pete	<i>George Jamieson</i>
Paul	<i>Ione Burke</i>
Captain Ratts . . .	<i>Harry Pearson</i>

In the early development of American drama we find many complaints against the "star" system. Boucicault took a decided stand in this matter and contended that the play was of prime importance and not the "star".

The year after the successful premiere of "The Octoroon", Boucicault spent his efforts in organizing a touring company to prove his theory that "the play is the thing". Later in the season he returned to London and brought out "The Colleen Bawn", one of his best known dramas. The following years he managed the Adelphi and Westminster Theatres in London. He continued writing and acting and returned to the United States in 1876. Here again he took up arduous tasks, managed the New Park Theatre on Broadway, and remained actively a part of theatrical life until the time of his death in New York City, Thursday, September 18, 1890. Boucicault wrote and adapted nearly four hundred plays.

Redemption

By *Leo Tolstoy*. Written 1900.

Number XVII.

IF the purpose of great drama is to capture an important episode in the existence of some person or persons at a given time then, undoubtedly, Tolstoy is one of the greatest masters of his field whether he is speaking through a novel or through a play.

Count Leo Tolstoy, recognized as one of the major forces in the literature of the world, is the great figure in Russian literature. Through his work he became known on the Continent, in England and America as a novelist, essayist, propagandist, and dramatist. Tolstoy is more popular with the reading public than his predecessors Puskin and Turgenev, and his successors Dostoyevsky and Gorki. At the time of his death, November 7, 1910, he enjoyed popularity and universal acclaim which was equalled by none of his contemporaries.

George Papall Noyes declares that "Tolstoy was intensely Russian in his temperament and in the most striking qualities of his genius. His unflinching realism, the unpoetic form and the unromantic tone of all his work, his habitual neglect of all compromise, his enthusiastic adoption of a revolutionary religious and social philosophy, the spirit of universal brotherly love that fills his work, are all qualities that, though far from peculiar to Russia, may justly be called national Russian traits.

"His work will preserve for all time a panorama of Russian life from the time of the conflict of the peasant empire with Napoleon at the beginning of the nineteenth century to the beginning of the Industrial Revolution within it at the close of that century."

It was thirty-three years after the publication of Tolstoy's first play, and nine years after his death, before England witnessed a play of his at a London Theatre. "Anna Karenina", and "Resurrection" had been acted but without the author's approval of the adaptations for he did not think these two great novels could be properly dramatized.

Count Leo Tolstoy was descended from a line of illustrious men. His predecessors were titled Russians. The first Count Tolstoy was an ambassador under Peter the Great, and another relative was Prince Volkonsky, commander-in-chief of Catherine the Great's forces. His father, a young nobleman of rank, married Princess Mary Volkonsky—who was rich, refined, musical, and spoke five languages. Leo, who was born on August 28, 1828, was the youngest of five children.

The beautiful estate, Yasnaya Polyana, where he spent the greater part of his life, is located 130 miles south of Moscow. The self-assurance and confidence which Tolstoy manifested all his life was gained on his ancestral domain where his family lived and ruled like feudal lords.

When Alexander III came to the throne Russia experienced radical changes and entered a period of depression and stagnation. In those trying days Tolstoy was stirred by the situation and in spite of the strictest censorship he exhorted his readers to follow their own opinion. He redoubled his efforts against the dominance of the crown and thus his part in laying the foundation of the revolution became a powerful one.

A severe illness overcame Tolstoy in 1886 and during this long period he took a deep interest in the drama. This new interest found expression in a play which he dedicated to his wife. So intent was he upon this new creation that his family went about the house on tip-toe.

The fruit of his efforts was "The Power of Darkness". Of this work Tolstoy remarked: "When I am writing a novel I paint, and, so to say, work with a brush. There I feel free. When it comes out awkwardly I change it, add colors and amplify. It has no shadows and half-tones. All must be clear-cut and in story relief. The incidents must be ready, fully ripened, and the whole work lies in representing these fully-matured moments, these ripe moods of the characters. This is exceedingly difficult, especially when dealing with the life of peasants, which is a foreign land to us—another hemisphere!"

About the same time Tolstoy wrote "The Power of Darkness" he completed a full-length comedy "The Continental Family", which he offered to the Imperial Theatre in Moscow. Then for a period he neglected drama because he objected to the censorship, the re-writing, and the changes which the state authorities constantly demanded. Tolstoy would take no pay for his work and as a result his royalties from the Imperial Theatre were promptly turned over for the improvement of the ballet. His next dramatic work was "Fruits of Culture" which was acted first by members of his family and their friends, and later by professionals who produced it successfully in the major theatres of Russia. This comedy is the most humorous of Tolstoy's works—and an excellent vehicle for the stage.

Three plays were published after his death:—"The Live Corpse", "The Cause of It All", a temperance drama; and "The Light Shines in Darkness".

"The Live Corpse" was written in the year 1900, in Moscow, at Pirogor, the estate of Sergey Miklaevich, Tolstoy's brother, and at Yasnaya Polyana, Tolstoy's own estate. In England and America *the play has been presented* under the title of "Redemption". Morris Gest, in association with Edgar Selwyn, presented "Redemp-

tion" in New York City with Alexander Moissi, the greatest actor of Central Europe, in the stellar role. "Redemption" was also presented by Arthur Hopkins, October 3, 1918, at the Plymouth Theatre, New York City, with John Barrymore in the leading part.

The story of "Redemption" commences in the dining room of Fedya's apartment in Moscow. Anna Pavlovna, Fedya's mother-in-law, is discussing with Sasha, her youngest daughter, the intemperate habits of Fedya that have led to an open break with his wife, Lisa, who is Madam Pavlovna's eldest daughter and Sasha's oldest sister. Even the birth of a son fails to reunite the estranged couple. Pavlovna urges Lisa to obtain a divorce and marry Victor Karenin, an old friend. She refuses and urges Fedya, by letter, to return to her. In the meantime Fedya has become enamored of a gypsy girl by the name of Masha. Victor locates the couple and gives the letter to Fedya who refuses to return. Masha then discovers her lover's plan to commit suicide. She persuades him to leave his clothes on a river bank and disappear with her. Later Lisa and Karenin marry. Pytushkoff learns of Fedya's deception and turns him over to the police. A trial takes place which involves Lisa and Victor who are accused of having arranged the "death" of Fedya. Fedya in order to clear up the situation takes his own life.



A Doll's House

By *Henrik Ibsen*. Written 1879.

Number XVIII.

WITH the coming of the Twentieth Century there was a definite need for a new spirit in the European and the English Theatre. Various writers had experimented with dramatic forms without great success. Preceding Henrik Ibsen were such shining lights as Sheridan, Knowles, Bulwer-Lytton, and W. G. Wills. In the stage of transition came Boucicault, Tom Taylor, and Charles Read with new ideas and a fresh approach toward subject matter. The need of great drama has been present in every age and none felt this lack of great theatre more than Matthew Arnold who wrote in 1879: "We are at the end of a period, and have to deal with the facts and symptoms of a new period on which we are entering; and prominent among these facts and symptoms is irresistibility of the theatre. . . . What is certain is that a signal change is coming over us, and that it has already made great progress. . . . I see our community turning to theatre with eagerness and finding the English theatre without organization, or purpose, or dignity, and no modern drama at all except a fantastical one. . . . The theatre is irresistible; organize the theatre."

The answer to this situation was discovered when, as Miriam Franc says, "Ten years later 'A Doll's House' shocked out of its apathy the English theatrical world, and discerning critics knew that the needed strong and vivid influence had been found. As was inevitable, his iconoclasm, realism, symbolism, social sense, and technique influenced English drama profoundly. Justin McCarthy wrote "To contest the influence of Ibsen upon

this country would be needless. . . .’ Of the more prominent English dramatists, Pinero, Jones, Shaw, and Galsworthy seem to show most plainly the influence of Ibsen.”

Half a century ago Ibsen was the subject matter for heated arguments among students of the theatre, professional actors, and university groups. Today his place is unchallenged as one of the greatest figures in the development of drama. Henrik Ibsen was born March 20, 1828, the same year as Leo Tolstoy, at Skein, Norway. The little village honored by his birth was noted only as a shipping post. From early childhood until he reached middle age Ibsen lived in poverty. Of his unfortunate circumstances Christopher Lorenz Due says:

“He must have had an exceptionally strong constitution, for when his financial conditions compelled him to practice the most stringent economy, he tried to do without underclothing, and finally even without stockings. In these experiments he succeeded; and in winter he went without an overcoat.”

In 1843, Ibsen was apprenticed to an apothecary in Grimstad where he remained for seven dreary years. During this trying time he wrote some poetry, and read and studied every hour he could in order to glean an education. In 1850, while a student at Christiania, he published under an assumed name his first work, a blank-verse tragedy entitled “Catilina”. In 1851 he was named “stage-poet” for the Bergen Theatre. This post carried a small salary and travelling expenses, plus duties similar to that of house manager. In 1852 he studied stage craft for five months in Copenhagen and Dresden. His most fortunate residence at Bergen brought him in contact with Susannah Thorensen, daughter of a rector. This friendship led to a very satisfactory marriage. Ibsen’s biographers declare that she must have

been a saint to have endured a man of such restraint, such silent moods, and such pessimism—but the fact remains that they were happy together.

From 1857 until 1862 Ibsen was manager of the two theatres at Christiania; 1862 saw the publication of his rhyme-drama "Love's Comedy", a piece depicting the way society murders the poetry of love; in April, 1864, he started by way of Berlin and Trieste ultimately to settle in Rome where he lived for a while; thence to Germany in 1868, living for the most part in Dresden and Munich. At this point in his career he published "Brand", a "tragedy of idealism", which was soon followed by "Peer Gynt", and the political comedy, "The Young Men's League". In his fiftieth year Ibsen forsook his romantic historical dramas and spent his time on sociological plays. In this new field of endeavor he pictures the maladjustments of people in the various levels of society, and presents an absorbing view of the struggle people have in coping with religious, political, and social problems. Through his writing Ibsen championed the cause of women and visioned the reorganization of society through their influence alone. He was a dreamer, a realist, an idealist, and gave to the people of his age what he knew they needed the most. Twenty-two years after the publication of Ibsen's first play, and five years after the publication of two of his greatest works, "Brand", and "Peer Gynt", the Spectator of March 16, 1872, gave the first recognition of Ibsen in an English periodical.

In 1873 he published "Emperor and Galilean"; in 1877, "The Pillars of Society"; in 1879, "A Doll's House"; and in 1881, "Ghosts". Also in 1881 William Archer met Ibsen for the first time in Rome and was so impressed with the playwright that upon his return to England he became one of Ibsen's most ardent defenders.

The first performance of "A Doll's House" in English was given December 7, 1883, in Louisville, Kentucky, with Madam Modjeska in the role of Nora. London first saw the drama March 3, 1884, at the Prince's Theatre under the title "Breaking a Butterfly". This presentation, which was most unsatisfactory, was an adaptation by Henry Arthur Jones and Henry Herman. The program note explained that the adaptation was "founded on Ibsen's 'Nora' ". On June 7, 1889, the play was given an excellent production at the Novelty Theatre with Charrington in the role of Helmer, and Janet Achurch playing Nora. So successful was the play at this point that Charrington included it in his repertoire on a long Australian tour, and played it with marked success in America, New Zealand, India, and Egypt. During the days when "A Doll's House" was creating a furor Ibsen went quietly about his work and produced some of his greatest dramas, namely, "Hedda Gabler", "The Master Builder", "Little Eyolf", "John Gabriel Borkman", and "When We Dead Awaken".

Before Ibsen's death, May 23, 1906, he had acquired wealth and international fame as one of the world's most important dramatists.

Dr. Brandes, in his "Eminent Authors of the Nineteenth Century", groups the ideas found in Ibsen's dramas into four classifications, namely:—

1. Those connected with religion.
2. Those contrasting the past with the present.
3. Those that treat of social classes and their life-struggle.
4. Those that discuss the relation of the sexes.

In "A Doll's House" the author's analysis of a complex situation is an interesting exposition of the marriage problem. The action takes place from Christmas Eve to

Christmas Night in the sitting room of the flat of Torvald Helmer in Christiania.

The characters in the play are:—

Torvald Helmer, manager of the Joint Stock Bank.

Nora Helmer, his wife.

Dr. Rank, their friend.

Nils Krogstad, formerly a lawyer but now in the employ of the bank.

Mrs. Linden, close friend of Nora.

Anna, Ellen,—the servants.

Ivar, Emmy, Bob,—the Helmer children.

The opening scene introduces Helmer, successful and happy with his carefree wife Nora. They discuss playfully the expenses of the household. No sooner has Ibsen struck this pleasant note than he proceeds to destroy the happy lives of his two main characters. A note forged by Nora for twelve hundred dollars brings into the plot a disreputable lawyer, Krogstad, who is subordinate to Helmer in the bank. Krogstad detects the forgery and uses the information to force Nora to intercede in his behalf at the bank where his position is none too certain. Krogstad thinks that Mrs. Linden, confidant of Nora's, is scheduled to fill his place. Helmer is informed of his wife's guilt by Krogstad. The drama comes to a dramatic ending when Nora declares her first duty is not to her husband and her children but to herself. Nora leaves the shelter of her home and goes forth into the world to test her own strength as a woman rather than remain any longer as a "doll" in her husband's house.



Patience

By Gilbert and Sullivan. Produced Oct. 10,
1881. Number XIX.

THE Fates were kind to England when Gilbert and Sullivan lived and worked as contemporaries for through their combined efforts which were moulded into an indivisible unit they brought a new note of happiness to the scale of life. They were without doubt the gayest, most original, and exciting craftsmen to emerge from the Victorian age. They carved for themselves a niche so completely unique that the stage has produced nothing like them before or since their time. Gilbert and Sullivan brought happiness to the theatre which chased out gloom, manners which supplanted existing vulgarities, and keen wit which off-set the dull performances of the London theatres at a time when comic opera had almost been forgotten.

People from all walks of life crowded the Savoy to be charmed by the magnetism of the operas. The spectators were so enthralled by the clever lines and haunting melodies that when a player missed a cue he was prompted with glee by spectators from every part of the house.

Of the authorities who have written enthusiastically about the work of these two extraordinary men H. M. Walbrook points out there were fourteen Gilbert and Sullivan operas, instead of the thirteen frequently listed, and that their first work was acted at the old Gaiety Theatre in Dean Street. According to Mr. Walbrook, " 'Cox and Box' which contains some of Sullivan's prettiest music, and 'Contrabandista' are not Gilbert and Sullivan at all, but Burnand and Sullivan. The first col-

laborative work of William Schwenck Gilbert and Arthur Sullivan was the comic opera in two acts called 'Thespis', or 'The Gods Grown Old', and was first presented by Mr. John Hollingshead at the Gaiety on the night of December 23rd, 1871".

The complete list of the Gilbert and Sullivan Operas is as follows:

1. "Thespis", February 3, 1871, Gaiety Theatre
2. "Trial by Jury", March 25, 1875, at the Royalty Theatre
3. "The Sorcerer", November 17, 1877, Opera Comique
4. "H.M.S. Pinafore", May 28, 1878, Opera Comique
5. "Pirates of Penzance", April 3, 1880, Opera Comique
6. "Patience", or "Bunthorne's Bride", Opened Opera Comique, April 23, 1881. Transferred to Savoy Theatre, Oct. 10
7. "Iolanthe", November 25, 1882, Savoy Theatre
8. "Princess Ida", January 5, 1884, Savoy Theatre
9. "The Mikado", March 14, 1885, Savoy Theatre
10. "Ruddigore", January 22, 1887, Savoy Theatre
11. "Yeoman of the Guard", October 3, 1888, Savoy Theatre
12. "Gondoliers", December 7, 1889, Savoy Theatre
13. "Utopia Limited", October 7, 1893, Savoy Theatre
14. "The Grand Duke", March 7, 1896, Savoy Theatre

William Schwenck Gilbert was born in London. His father was the noted novelist, and he numbered among his illustrious ancestors Sir Humphrey Gilbert who was famed as an explorer in the days of Queen Elizabeth. Gilbert received an excellent education, studied law,

was graduated from the University of London, worked four years in the Education Department of the Privy Council, and became a regular contributor to the weekly comic magazine "Fun". His famous "Bab Ballads", with riotous good humor, were the seeds which flowered into unrivalled lyrics found in his comic operas. Later he was employed by the Illustrated Times as dramatic critic. This excellent background, coupled with a keen sense of evaluation of dramatic performances, is reflected in the clear cut style shown by Gilbert in his writing.

Arthur Sullivan was a natural musician and inherited his love of music from his Irish father who taught him to play every wind instrument in the band by the time he was eight years of age. When he was fourteen he won the Mendelssohn Scholarship at the Royal Academy of Music. His oratorio, "The Prodigal Son", which he wrote at the age of twenty-seven, gained him national recognition as a classic composer.

The careful training of Sullivan when coupled with that of Gilbert was, quite naturally, destined to produce excellent results. The fruits of their combined efforts speak for themselves. In recognition of their individual talents Sullivan was knighted in 1883, and Gilbert in 1907.

Most fortunate were these two gifted gentlemen in having as their patron Richard D'Oyly Carte, who believed in them as thoroughly, whose instinct for genius was so unerring, that he brought Gilbert and Sullivan together, acted as impresario over their joint careers, and ensconced them in the Savoy Theatre which served as a setting for their delightful creations.

Mr. D'Oyly Carte, on October 10, 1881, opened the Savoy Theatre, which he designed and operated, with Gilbert and Sullivan's "Patience" which he transferred from the Opera Comique. The production was acclaimed

by a distinguished audience and the play ran until November 22, 1882, closing after a successful engagement of 408 performances.

The Savoy was considered the most modern theatre in its day. Electric lights were "scientifically and elaborately 'laid on' not merely 'in front of the house', but behind the scenes. No one who has not seen it can conceive how elaborate and complicated is the mechanism for the control of the lighting". The playhouse was decorated in a color scheme of white and gold, with crimson draperies.

On the eve of the opening performance of "Patience" D'Oyly Carte issued the following statement: "Ladies and Gentlemen:—I beg leave to lay before you some details of a new theatre, which I have caused to be built with the intention of devoting it to the representation of the operas of Messrs. W. S. Gilbert and Arthur Sullivan, with whose joint production I have, up to now, had the advantage of being associated.

"The Savoy Theatre is placed between the Strand and the Victoria Embankment, on a plot of land of which I have purchased the freehold, and is built on a spot possessing many associations of historic interest, being close to the Savoy Chapel and the 'precinct of the Savoy', where stood formerly the Savoy Palace, once inhabited by John of Gaunt and the Dukes of Lancaster, and made memorable in the Wars of the Roses. On the Savoy Manor there was formerly a theatre. I have used the ancient name as an appropriate title for the present one. . . . The Theatre . . . will seat 1,292 persons.

"From the time, now some years since, that the first electric lights in lamps were exhibited outside the Paris Opera House, I have been convinced that electric light in form is the light of the future for use in the theatre, not to go further. The invention of the 'incandescent lamp' has now paved the way for the application of elec-

tricity to lighting houses, and consequently theatre.

"The theatre will be opened under my management on Monday next, October 10, and I have the satisfaction to be able to announce that the opening piece will be Messrs. W. S. Gilbert and Arthur Sullivan's opera, "Patience", which, produced at the Opera Comique on April 23, is still running with a success beyond any precedent.

"The piece is mounted afresh with new scenery, costumes, and increased chorus. It is being again rehearsed under the personal direction of the author and the composer, and on the opening night it will be conducted by the composer.

"I am, ladies and gentlemen, your obedient servant. R. D'Oyly Carte, Beaufort House, Strand, October 6, 1881".

The story of "Patience" or, "Bunthorne's Bride", was originally based on the Bab Ballad, "The Rival Curates". As the writing progressed, rather than offend, the clergymen in the piece were changed with aesthetic poets. The character of Bunthorne was quite probably intended as a caricature of Oscar Wilde, and that of Grosvenor to be the poet Swinburne. Reginald Bunthorne (a fleshy poet) was played by Mr. George Grossmith, Jr., and the role of Archibald Grosvenor (an Idyllic Poet) by Mr. Rutland Barrington. Isaac Goldberg, in discussing the casting of "Patience" says: "The diminutive Grossmith was made up, as nearly as he could manage it, to resemble Wilde; the portly Barrington, by way of paradox, travestied the diminutive Swinburne. Wilde, of course, was a big fellow, so that the impersonation by Grossmith presented difficulties. What he lacked in stature, Grossmith atoned for by a clever mimicking of the aesthetic's numerous mannerisms. Originally, Grosvenor's first name had been Algernon—an affectionate

side glance at Swinburne, but a prominent family that included an Algeron Grosvenor raised objection and Gilbert, perhaps bethinking himself of his early ballad, hit upon Archibald.

"In dialogue and in song Gilbert in "Patience" is at his sparkling and sentimental best. Patience is among the most pleasant, the most tuneful, of the operettas."

The plot of the opera deals with the pursuit of Grosvenor and Bunthorne for the hand of the village milkmaid. Bunthorne has caused the girls of the village to be infatuated with him because of his aesthetic views. When Lady Jane tells the maidens that Bunthorne is engaged to Patience and that they should center their affections on the Dragoon Guards the maids ignore her admonition. Patience, unaware of Bunthorne's attitude, meets Archibald Grosvenor. They fall in love but she rejects him because she believes all true love is based on sacrifice. With this ideal in mind she turns again to Bunthorne. Grosvenor is now in turn forced to reveal his true self, and disclose his pose of aestheticism. Thus the two men in question are revealed as plain, ordinary human beings. The girls then forsake their frivolous ways and return to their faithful admirers. Patience accepts the love of Grosvenor and Bunthorne, in true Gilbert and Sullivan fashion, is left without a bride and contents himself with his aesthetic views on life.



Camille

By Dumas fils. Produced Feb. 2, 1852.

Number XX.

WHEN Alexander Dumas, the younger, came upon the scene as a novelist and playwright he arrived at a period in literature and drama which was witnessing the decline of "romanticism" and a definite turn toward "realism". Just as Alexander Dumas, the elder, had championed "romanticism" and had become famed and wealthy through his many novels, so did his son champion "realism" with the same satisfactory results which gained him membership in the French Academy which was awarded January 30, 1874.

Dumas fils had very decided opinions regarding his work and declared that he would "remain his own master and never write anything that he did not believe to be the absolute truth. . . . I write my play as if the characters were alive, and I give them the language of familiar life. Or, to put it into other terms, I mould in plastic clay, and I thus obtain backgrounds of great strength and points of emphasis of great vigor. . . . We have nothing to invent; we have only to see, to remember, to feel, to co-ordinate, and to re-establish, under a special form, that which all spectators must immediately remember having felt or seen without having up to that time been able to take notice of it."

H. S. Schwarz in his excellent biography of Dumas fils says:

"Dumas' stage craft is the work of a master hand. He developed to a unique degree the 'raisonneur', even though he made of him a stereotyped character. He displayed unusual skill in the arrangement of his charac-

ters, interweaving them ingeniously into the action of the drama. To secure concentration of interest he arranged a fore-and-aft group of characters, thereby strengthening his main theme. He developed the triangle play beyond its usual three-sided limitation. He rendered his action dynamic by terminating individual acts with situations of great intensity, thereby bridging the gap caused by intermissions, and also by dovetailing the scenes within the acts so that their strength became cumulative. His style is conspicuous for two elements with an analogy; and those features are largely responsible for the brilliance of his dialogue and for the clarity of what was so dear to his heart, the logical play."

Mr. Schwarz classifies the works of Dumas into three successive stages as follows:—

1. Dumas' observation of a section of society which had not been clearly analyzed. The main action centering upon women of important and various types.
2. Dumas' interest in reform and the alteration of existing laws.
3. The depicting of man taking law into his own hands.

Alexander Dumas, the younger, was born in Paris on July 27, 1824, the year in which Charles X ascended the throne, and in his span of life saw history change itself fantastically through such stirring times as the Restoration, the Constitutional Monarch, the Second Republic, the Second Empire, and a quarter of a century of the unsettled days of the Third Republic.

Dumas fils was the son of the great French novelist and the dressmaker Marie Lebay. The elder Dumas was tolerant toward his heir and placed the young boy in the Pension Goubaux in 1831 where he received good training but was the object of ridicule from his unthink-

ing classmates. His treatment altered his whole outlook on life and he vowed to do all in his power to fight such domination until the idea became an obsession with him. Life was so unpleasant that Dumas fils transferred to the College de Bourbon. During these formative years Alexander Dumas was considerate enough to invite the boy to live in his own home. So at the age of seventeen Dumas fils experienced, for the first time, the luxury of life. He became reckless in his living and after accumulating debts amounting to two thousand dollars the senior Dumas put the lad out on his own resources. Dumas fils then turned to writing which was definitely bourgeoisie in character and contained acid assaults upon the nobility.

His first effort was a book of verse. In 1848 he published "La Dame Aux Camélias" which he adapted in play form from the book a year later. When the finished work was submitted for production it was refused by the censors. No explanation was offered the young author but some authorities state the action was taken in order to protect the great reputation of Dumas' father. The manager of the Vaudeville theatre, where the play was in rehearsal, solicited the aid of M. de Morney who suggested that the play be read by Jules Janin, Emile Augier, and Léon Gozlan. In turn the drama was submitted to the Minister of the Interior and the Prince-President. Performance rights were again denied. Fate stepped in and M. de Morney became Minister of the Interior in December, 1851. He immediately lifted the ban on the much discussed "Lady of the Camellias" and it was performed for the first time February 2, 1852, and for one hundred consecutive nights.

Not quite two years after the premiere in Paris "Camille" was played for the first time in America at the old Broadway Theatre in New York City, December

9, 1853. Jean Davenport played the title role in her own adaptation which she called, "Camille, or The Fate of a Coquette". The next star to appear in the vehicle was Laura Keane, March 11, 1856, in a production called "Camille, or A Moral of Life". It was Matilda Heron who scored the first great American success in the play in her New York debut at Wallack's Theatre, Jan. 22, 1857. Other important actresses in the leading role of "Camille" have been Mrs. D. P. Bowers, 1864; Agnes Ethel, 1868; Clara Morris, 1878; Mme. Modjeska; Sarah Bernhardt, at the Booth Theatre, 1880; Eleanora Duse in her American debut at the Fifth Avenue Theatre, 1893. Other great artists of the legitimate stage who acted the Dumas drama are: Mlle. Rhea, Mary Provost, Jane Coombs, Virginia Harned, Lucille Western, Ada Gray, Louise Pomeroy, Fanny Davenport, Nance O'Neill, Olga Nethersole, Jane Harding, Ethel Barrymore, Lillian Gish, Eva LeGallienne, Jane Cowl. Recently Greta Garbo was seen in the screen version.

The following synopsis of "Camille" is found in the prompt-book used by Signora Eleanora Duse:

"Margherita Gauthier, called the Lady with the Camellias, makes the acquaintance of Armando Duval at an evening party which she gives to her friends. The dissolute life she is compelled to lead has always been distasteful to her. She longs for genuine love, such as it is not in the power of Mons. de Varville or the Comte de Giray to give. Most men of her acquaintance being of the same mould as these two sybarites she at first doubts the promptings of her heart that incline her towards Armando and scarcely rates his love higher than that of other men. But she soon discovers how deep his passion is and returns it. For a time they lead a happy life in a country house near Paris. When their means begin to give out, Margherita evinces her disinterestedness by

selling all her valuables, horses and carriages; and Armando, not willing to be outdone, goes to Paris to make over to her his interest in his mother's estate. During his absence his father calls on Margherita and entreats her to leave Armando, her relations to him having caused a scandal which threatens to prevent his sister's marriage, besides threatening his own career. Knowing that Armando cannot be prevailed upon to abandon her, Margherita decides to sacrifice herself. No other means of doing this presents itself than to seem unworthy of his love. She gains this end by returning into the circle of her former associates and making Armando believe that she has yielded to the advances of de Varville. A month later he discovers her at a party in the salon of Olympia and, still loving her madly importunes her to follow him. But Margherita, true to her world, declares she loves none but Varville. Maddened by her supposed inconstancy, he heaps the most shocking insults upon her in the presence of the whole company. Margherita, who has been ailing for some time, breaks down under the strain of this continued excitement. Her only consolation is a letter she receives from Armando's father, wherein he acknowledges the greatness of her sacrifice and bids her to be prepared for the return of Armando who is sojourning in foreign countries. This hope keeps up the sinking spirits until Armando actually returns. He finds her dying painlessly and she falls asleep in his arms never to wake up again."

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Cyrano De Bergerac

By *Edmond Rostand*. Produced Dec. 28,
1897. Number XXI.

IN the development of drama important milestones take the form of great plays which made memorable first nights and caused students of the theatre to hail the premiere. In the history of the theatre "Cyrano de Bergerac" is a magnificent example of a play which caused a furor when it was first produced. In speaking of Edmond Rostand, the author of the masterpiece in question, William Lyon Phelps in his "Essays on Dramatists" says: "Modern France has contributed to the literature of the world the greatest play since the days of Shakespeare, and the greatest drama since Goethe's 'Faust'. From any and every great point of view, Edmond Rostand is a giant. He is great in so many different ways—great as a poet, dramatist, playwright, wit, humorist, romantic idealist, satirist; and as a language virtuoso he is equally supreme. His dramatic works consist of six plays—three, minor, three major; they are a permanent addition to literature; they contain characters that will last as long as the best of Victor Hugo and the best of old Alexander Dumas, which means they will last as long as good books are read. It is astonishing how much one man can give to his country; it is true that three plays by Rostand are not only worth all the plays written by other Frenchmen during the last thirty years, but that they represent a creative splendour in the theatre that has not been witnessed since Shakespeare. The first night of 'Cyrano' was the greatest first night on any stage within the memory of living man; the first night of 'Chantecler' was the prime news of the world."

The important plays by Rostand were "Les Deux Pierrots", dealing with a joyous and a tragic pierrot, "Les Romanesques", a satire on Romeo and Juliet, "La Princesse Lointaine", a story of the middle ages, "La Samaritaine", based on a verse in the Bible, "Cyrano de Bergerac", based on the life of the Seventeenth Century author, "L'Aiglon", the story of Napoleon's son, "Chantecler", a story of fowls in the barnyard, and "La Dernière Nuit de Don Juan", deals with the life of an adventurous lover.

Edmond Rostand was born at Marseilles, France, on April 1, 1868. His father was a cultured gentleman who had gained wealth and renown as a journalist. Edmond was given a splendid education in liberal arts while he was a student in Paris.

His one-act comedy, "Le Gant Rouge" was presented at the Cluny Theatre on August 24, 1888. Of this production Rostand said, "There is nothing to be said about it, except that it was the first realization of a dream that has always haunted me as a child, and that was that I must write for the stage."

He received his degree in law from Stanislas College in 1890. He soon deserted this profession for a career in creative writing and in the same year finished "Les Romanesques" which received a prize of four thousand francs for the best comedy of that season. Rostand's next literary effort was "La Princesse Lointaine" which was produced on April 5, 1895 with Sarah Bernhardt, Guitry, and Coquelin in the cast.

Two years later Rostand skyrocketed to international fame when his "Cyrano de Bergerac" was presented for the first time at the Théâtre de la Porte Saint-Martin. Critics were unanimous in their praise. Rostand was hailed as the greatest author since the days of Shakespeare. Enthusiastic playgoers packed the theatre to

witness a play which was destined to run for three hundred performances. The magnificent writing, beauty of production, and the acting of Coquelin made the premiere a triumphant success.

Cyrano, the main character in the play, was an interesting figure in Paris of the early Seventeenth Century. At once warrior, duellist, and man of letters, he was an inspiration to the genius of Rostand. In him the playwright found all the elements both of comedy and pathos. Cyrano's monstrous nose, his extravagance, and his absurdities serve to throw into relief his fantastic self-abnegation and to produce a subject for a play in which there is room for both laughter and tears.

No higher appreciation of Coquelin, who played the leading role, can indeed be found than in the author's dedication: "It is to the soul of Cyrano I wish to dedicate this poem. But it is to you, Coquelin, that I dedicate it, since into you Cyrano's soul has entered."

The central theme of the story is the hopeless love of Bergerac for his cousin, Roxane, who has fallen in love with the handsome face of Christian de Neuville, a cadet of Bergerac's own regiment, and not realizing her cousin's passion for herself makes him promise to help and protect his rival Christian. He knows Christian's shortcomings and vows to help him appear to be the man Roxane supposes him.

He teaches him the words in which to declare his devotion, writes his love letters for him, and withal manages the affair so discreetly that Roxane is completely deceived and believes that Christian not only looks like a hero but makes love like a poet. The play runs the gamut of romance from the gay opening which represents a theatrical performance in the Hotel de Bourgogne to the scene where Roxane relieves the famine of the encamped French soldiers at Arras who are held in control

by Cyrano who makes them forget their hunger when he recalls the glories of Gascony. Christian is killed when the Spaniards advance against the French. The last act, which takes place 15 years later, shows Roxane in a convent. The ever faithful Cyrano has paid her a visit each Saturday evening during all these years. On this visit, Roxane has promised to let him read the letter she found on Christian's dead body. The night is falling as Cyrano reads the very note he had composed for Christian, Roxane suddenly realizes the entire tragic situation. It is too late to make amends for Cyrano has been mortally wounded by a hired assassin. In his delirium, with sword in hand, he wards off his imaginary foes until he is conquered by death.

New York saw the premiere of "Cyrano de Bergerac" at the Garden Theatre, Oct. 3, 1898, with Richard Mansfield, one of the foremost actors of the time, in the title role. Margaret Anglin then made her first great success in the role of Roxane. On Dec. 10, 1900, at the same theatre, Bernhardt and Coquelin offered the first production in America of "Cyrano de Bergerac" in the original French of Edmond Rostand, and Sarah Bernhardt appeared for the first time as Roxane. Walter Hampden, in November 1923, made his great revival of "Cyrano" and rented the National Theatre for the winter of 1923-24 to present it in. Hampden scored a tremendous success and since then has played the role over a thousand times.



Peter Pan

By Sir James M. Barrie. Published in 1904.

Number XXII.

A FAR cry from the romanticism and brimming melodramas of Dumas fils and Rostand are the delicate, soaring, almost intangible plays of Barrie and Maeterlinck. It is a rare thing when a man appropriates a word so thoroughly for his own, that the mere mention of it immediately brings to mind the man and his works. Through no deliberate intentions on his part, an inseparable association has been formed between the word "whimsy" and the plays of J. M. Barrie. Whether this term has been used in praise, by those who love the sweetness and sentiment, the pathos and the glowing good-humor which permeate all of Barrie's plays, or in scorn by those who resent the quaintness and fanciful unreality of his works, the word belongs to Barrie, and adequately describes his writings. No playwright, before or since, has approached the gilded loveliness, the happy tears, and the sad smiles which characterize the works of this outstanding author, and which brought sweetness and light to an English theatre strongly under the influence of the heavy Ibsen dramas and the fine social plays being written by those two vigorous new young dramatists, Shaw and Galsworthy. The theatre needed a light touch, a bit of fantasy, and twinkling humor and beauty. Barrie gave those things to it.

Scotch by birth and Scotch by inheritance, he was born in Kirriemuir, Forfarshire, Scotland, May 9, 1860, where he spent his early years and intensified the already strong Scottish characteristics of his nature which always remained with him. The rich literary material which he

unconsciously accumulated during his boyhood in Kirriemuir is evidenced in his novels and plays, especially those having to do with Thrums, the name he used for his birthplace, Kirriemuir.

Always a small, shy, sensitive man, Barrie lived modestly and quietly all his life. His schooling was acquired at Dumfries Academy, where he was an unexceptional student, and at the University of Edinburgh from which he received an M.A., and later, in 1922, the degree of Doctor of Letters. After graduation he wrote for a Nottingham newspaper and tried unsuccessfully to sell some stories to London papers and periodicals. He came to London in 1885, and his first book, "Better Dead", a failure, was published in 1887. His second book, "Auld Licht Idylls", was published in 1888 and was a success. It was followed by several books, chiefly novels, which brought him world-wide fame: "A Window in Thrums"; 1889; "The Little Minister", 1891; "Margaret Ogilvy", 1896; "Sentimental Tommy", 1896; "Tommy and Grizel", 1900; and "The Little White Bird", 1902. From this date until 1920, when he practically stopped writing, Barrie wrote almost nothing but plays—so successfully, that he is now remembered more as a playwright than as a novelist. Among his more important works are: "The Admirable Crichton", 1902; "Peter Pan", (which was a dramatization of "The Little White Bird") 1904; "Alice-Sit-By-the-Fire", 1905; "What Every Woman Knows", 1908; "A Kiss for Cinderella", 1916; "Dear Brutus", 1917; and "Mary Rose", 1920. He wrote a number of fine one-act plays also, of which "The Twelve Pound Look" is perhaps the best known. Barrie was knighted in 1913. Just before his death in 1937, he wrote a play for Elizabeth Bergner, "The Boy David".

Of all Barrie's plays, probably the most famous is "Peter Pan". It is the story of Wendy, John, and Baby

Michael, the children of the Darling family, who are guarded in their nursery by Nana, a huge Newfoundland dog. One night when Nana is in disgrace, and the children are alone, Peter Pan, accompanied by the fairy Tinker Bell, comes to get back his shadow which had been severed from him one day when, while listening to Mrs. Darling's stories, he had hovered too close to the window. Wendy helps him sew his shadow back on, and in return he tells her several interesting facts: that the first laugh of every new baby becomes a fairy; that a fairy drops dead every time a child says, "I don't believe in fairies."

Peter is the Captain of the little lost boys who live in Never-Never Land, in a house under the ground. Much to Tinker Bell's disgust, Peter wants Wendy to fly back and become a mother to these boys. Wendy agrees, and accompanied by Michael and John, they go to Never-Never Land. Captain Hook, the one-armed pirate chief, whose other arm had been thrown to a crocodile by Peter, is the mortal enemy of the children, and wants to capture them. He is always followed by the crocodile, anxious for another bite; but unfortunately the beast has swallowed an alarm clock, the ticking of which always warns the Captain of its approach. When Captain Hook finally does capture Wendy and the others, Peter rescues them; and Hook, ingloriously defeated, throws himself to the waiting crocodile. Finally Peter and the Darling children fly back to the despairing parents. Mrs. Darling won't let Wendy return with Peter, but suggests instead that she adopt him; a proposal which he declines, preferring to remain forever the "boy who never grew up".

The part of Peter Pan has nearly always been played by girls, and in America it is inseparably associated with the name of Maude Adams. Peter was Miss Adams great-

est triumph, the role in which she is most fondly remembered by the countless thousands who saw her play it during its long and successful run. It has been revived since then, once with the late Marilyn Miller in the title role, and once with Eva Le Gallienne, and always it has charmed those who have seen it. Produced innumerable times in Little Theatres and schools throughout the country, it has never lost its popularity.



The Blue Bird

By *Maurice Maeterlinck*. Produced Sept. 30,
1908 at the Moscow Art Theatre.

Number XXIII.

THE symbolism apparent in the later works of Ibsen characterize nearly all the plays of Maurice Maeterlinck, the Belgian poet and dramatist. A philosopher and a mystic, Maeterlinck, like Barrie, has veered far from realism toward the realm of moods and atmosphere and delicate fantasy. Barrett H. Clark in his "The Continental Drama of Today" says that Maeterlinck "is in some respects the disciple of Poe and Emerson, both of whom played an important part in his development. . . . He occupies a unique position in modern drama and literature, as playwright, mystic, symbolist, and philosopher. Briefly, he has tried to express moods, subconscious and half-realized feelings, . . . the drama of situation and atmosphere. . . . He is a writer who expresses thoughts in the form of concrete images, because he believes that in no other way could these thoughts be so well expressed."

The career of Maeterlinck is as unusual as the plays he has written. A man who likes the material pleasures of life, and at the same time hates the atmosphere of the city; a man who loves nature and the warm green countryside; a man who experiments with dreams—believing them to be fragments of the future—and has had himself awakened in the middle of the night so that he may reproduce a dream exactly, and record and catalogue it; a man who believes that there is no death; a man who prefers to live apart from the rest of the world: these are some of the characteristics of Maeterlinck. He has spent

most of his life in Belgium and France, but in 1920 he ventured on a lecture tour of America, which was not too successful because of his limited knowledge of English. In 1911 he received the Nobel Prize for Literature.

Maeterlinck was born at Ghent on August 29, 1862. Descended from an old Flemish family, he had the medieval mystics in his blood. His schooling at a religious college in Ghent impressed him deeply, and made him a life-long student of religion. Upon graduating, he studied law at the University of Ghent, but literature was his major interest. In 1886 he went to Paris, and there met the leaders of the symbolist school of French poetry. Returning to Belgium upon his father's death, he began to write, and his first three publications were "The Massacre of the Innocents", a prose sketch; "Serres Chaudes", a book of poems; and "La Princesse Maleine", a five-act tragedy. In 1892 came "Pelleas et Mélisande" which found its source in the tragedy of Paolo and Francesca. Claude Debussy spent ten years converting this play into an opera, in which form it was presented at the Opera Comique in Paris.

The production of "Monna Vanna" in 1902 saw Maeterlinck's success as a practical playwright, but it was not until 1908, when he wrote "The Blue Bird", that his fame became international. Maeterlinck allowed Stanislavsky, director of the Moscow Art Theatre, to produce "The Blue Bird" first, in 1908. Presented in the Russian language, it received more than three hundred performances. Its success was equally great in London and New York, where young and old alike succumbed to the charm of its fantasy.

Frank W. Chandler in his "Aspects of Modern Drama" calls "The Blue Bird" a "fairy-tale quest for happiness", filled with humor and symbolism. In explaining that symbolism, he describes the plot as follows: "Mityl and

Tyltyl, the children of a woodcutter, on a Christmas Eve, dream of undertaking a quest in search of the Blue Bird—happiness. By virtue of a fairy's gift, they can look into the very soul of all things. Their adventures when the magic diamond is used are numerous and fantastic. The hours come dancing from the case of a clock; the souls of Fire, Bread, Sugar, Milk, Light, and of a Cat and a Dog are made visible, and accompany the children in their hunt for the Blue Bird. In vain they visit the land of Memory, the realm of Night, a forest, a grave-yard, and the kingdom of the Future. At length with a turn of the diamond, the visions fade, and the children awake in their cottage. She who had seemed like the fairy, Berylune, proves to be only a neighbor who enters to beg of Tyltyl his caged turtle dove for which her sick child keeps asking. As Tyltyl gives up the bird, he perceives that it has turned a deep blue. And when the neighbor comes back, with her little girl restored to health by the gift, Tyltyl finds in the child a resemblance to Light, his friend of the vision. As he opens the cage to show her the bird, it spreads wings and flies away.

"'Never mind', says Tyltyl. 'Don't cry!—I will catch him again', and, addressing the audience, he adds: 'If any of you should find him, would you be so very kind as to give him back to us?—We need him for our happiness later on.'

"So far as this fantasy has any meaning, it conveys the familiar moral that happiness, although sought in the past, in the remote or mysterious present, and the future, can best be found at home in an act of unselfishness. The final flight of the Blue Bird implies that happiness can be captured and held for only a moment. In the quest, not in the possession, lies joy. There are meanings faintly suggested, also, in other phases of the play—the blind rebellion of the things and the elements at the domina-

tion of man, the more conscious rebellion of the Cat; the instinctive friendship for man of the Dog, and the insight of children into nature. . . . As an acting drama, 'The Blue Bird' has achieved success, not because of its allegory, but rather because of its fanciful humor and the charm of its spectacle."



Justice

By *John Galsworthy*. Published 1910.

Number XXIV.

“‘JUSTICE,’” says Burns Mantle in “A Treasury of the Theatre”, “is credited with having inspired Winston Churchill, Home Secretary at the time, to make drastic changes in the rules affecting England’s penal system.” Here we have an instance illustrating the influence of the plays not only of John Galsworthy, but also of any sincere and vigorous dramatist who seeks to reform what he feels are unjust customs and institutions of his time by attacking their shortcomings in terms of drama. Far removed from the whimsy of Barrie and the symbolism of Maeterlinck are the quietly dramatic social dramas of Galsworthy and the witty, satiric social plays of Shaw. Both men were influenced by the purpose and methods of Ibsen. Both men were vivid, original thinkers, seeking new forms to express their thoughts, and anxious to break away from the old forms which were rapidly antiquating the works of Pinero and Jones. Their aim was the highest aim which a dramatist may set for himself: to strive for the improvement of mankind, to destroy what is bad, and to change what is wrong. The themes of many of Galsworthy’s plays are still vital and modern.

Barrett H. Clark in his “The British and American Drama of Today” says, “Galsworthy is one of the sincerest and most straight-forward of writers; literary, in the best sense of the word, clear, simple, and direct, he never fails to impress his readers and his audience with the meaning and importance of the play or novel under consideration. He is humanitarian in the broadest sense

of the word: he is more than a socialist or reformer, he is a sympathetic artist. In his plays he assumes so fair an attitude toward his characters and his audience that he at times almost fails to convince; in his dramatic style his reticence is occasionally so great that he incurs the danger of under-emphasis. Galsworthy is so sensitive that he perhaps over-estimates the sensitiveness of his audience. He is altogether one of the finest intellects and dramatic forces of the English stage."

Novelist par excellence, dramatist extraordinary, John Galsworthy's distinguished career achieved its climax in 1932 when he was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature. Born of well-to-do parents in Surrey, now a suburb of London, in 1867, Galsworthy attended school first at Harrow, and later at New College, Oxford, where he graduated in 1889 with an honor degree in law. Earnest and tenacious, sure and steady, as a youth, he nevertheless displayed little of the brilliance that was to characterize his future literary efforts. Called to the bar in 1890, he showed little interest in law. "I read," he says, "in various chambers, practiced almost not at all, and disliked my profession thoroughly." Financially well-off, he traveled for two years, reading voraciously all the while. He met and became a fast friend of Joseph Conrad, then still a sailor, on one of his sailing voyages, and encouraged Conrad to develop his already promising literary talents.

Galsworthy himself might never have become a writer had it not been for the encouragement of his wife-to-be. "If one has been brought up at an English public school and university", he says, "is addicted to sport and travel, has a small independent income, and is a briefless barrister, one will not take literature seriously, but one might like to please her of whom one was fond. I began. In two years I wrote nine tales. They had every fault".

"Jocelyn", his first novel, appeared in 1889. In 1906

came his first play, "The Silver Box". At first he wrote under the pseudonym of "John Sinjohn", but reverted to his own name after his fourth or fifth published work. In the field of the novel he is best known for his celebrated "Forsyte Saga", a series of stories dealing with the Forsyte family through three generations. Galsworthy worked on this family narrative off and on for twenty-six years. His many fine plays which brought him almost equal renown, and which are performed in America perhaps as frequently as in England, include: "Joy", 1907; "Strife", 1909; "Justice", 1910; "The Pigeon", 1912; "The Skin Game", 1920; "Loyalties", 1922; "Old English", 1924; "Escape", 1926. Galsworthy's plays are nearly all serious, individual, powerful, and deal with social problems themes.

Galsworthy was a great lover of music, especially of the works of Bach and Chopin. His manner was courteous and easy. Frank Harris has described him as "about medium height, spare of habit and vigorous, his head long, well-shaped; his features fairly regular, a straight nose, high forehead; he is almost completely bald and wears glasses. . . . Seen close to, his face becomes more interesting; the serious blue eyes can laugh; the lips are large and well-cut, promising a good deal of feeling, but the characteristic expression of the face is seriousness and sincerity". Galsworthy died in 1933.

Perhaps one of Galsworthy's greatest social dramas is "Justice", in which he assails the indiscriminating interference of the law with private concerns. John Barrymore scored his first great triumph when he played the leading role in it in New York. Frank W. Chandler has this to say in his brief and excellent summary of Galsworthy's play: "In 'Justice', he traces the career of a youth who steals from his employers under stress of temptation. Falder's sympathies are engaged by the misfortunes of

a woman married to a drunken brute. When crazed by anxiety for her safety, Falder raises a check from nine pounds to ninety, and plans to use the difference to enable the woman to escape from her husband to South America. Detected by his employers, he is arrested and brought to trial. After an elaborate court room scene. . . . Falder is in prison, going silly from solitary confinement. . . . Yet the doctor pronounces him sound in body and mind, and the chaplain regards him with favor as peculiarly susceptible to religious impressions.

"Two years later, when Falder is released as a ticket-of-leave man, he can find no one to trust him except as he forges testimonials of character. The woman for whose sake he fell into crime has gone from bad to worse, and, after working at skirts in a sweat-shop, has succumbed to an easier way of life.

"Having met Falder by chance, Ruth comes to his first employers to beg his reinstatement. He follows her in, admitting that he has lost the few jobs that he could get. 'The fact is', he says hopelessly, 'I seem to be struggling against a thing that's all around me . . . as if I were in a net. . . . I'm afraid all the time now. Falder's fears are justified, for, at this juncture, the detective who had arrested him in the first place enters to claim him for having forged a reference. His old employers attempt to shield him, but in vain. As he is dragged down the stairs, he makes a desperate leap, falls, and breaks his neck.

"This matter-of-fact play is the more effective in that it tells its story dispassionately. No character is over-drawn. The criminal is not a villain; nor is he an innocent, abused and sentimentalized. The men who send him to jail are not stony-hearted capitalists. Even the prison officials are well intentioned and compassionate. Indeed, what differentiates this piece from the old-style

melodrama of crime is its temperate tone, its absence of heat and hysterics. . . . Galsworthy indulges in no loud invectives against the criminal law; instead he offers a common instance of the inability of that law to cope intelligently with individual delinquency”.



Back to Methuselah

By *George Bernard Shaw*. Published in 1922.

Number XXV.

LIKE Galsworthy, Shaw attacked the out-moded social conventions and ideals of his time. But he went even further than Galsworthy. While the latter strives gravely, seriously, and with infinite fairness to show both sides of every tradition or code, the injustice of which he is attacking, Shaw is more one-sided in his approach. Believing that ridicule is the most effective weapon in the hands of a dramatist who wants to reveal and change certain evil conditions and circumstances for mankind's moral and political welfare, he stabs at many of our practices and institutions with sharp laughs of scorn, which amuse us and make us cringe at the same time.

"The drama of satire", says Frank W. Chandler in his 'Aspects of Modern Drama' "is as old as Aristophanes and as new as Bernard Shaw. The dramatic satirist does not attempt to draw a faithful picture of life as it is. Nor, on the other hand, does he paint life as it ought to be. Strictly speaking, he is neither an idealist nor a realist; yet he has affiliations with both. He observes the world of reality, like the realist, and he dreams of a better world, like the idealist. He is dissatisfied with life as it is just because he conceives of life as it should be, but instead of insisting upon either of these phases, he creates, with a definite purpose, a misrepresentation of life. That is, he seizes upon some defect, some abuse, some departure from the ideal norm in actual life, and isolates and exaggerates it, to the end that we may henceforth regard it as absurd. Moreover, unlike the humorist,

the satirist regards this absurdity with some degree of personal antipathy. . . . Your satirist is always an egoist, asserting the ludicrous failure of things as they are to conform to his own scheme of things as they should be."

Shaw himself says, "I am convinced that fine art is the subtlest, the most seductive, the most effective means of propagandism in the world, excepting only the example of personal conduct; and I waive even this exception in favor of the art of the stage, because it works by exhibiting examples of personal conduct made intelligible and moving to crowds of unobservant, unreflecting people to whom life means nothing".

There is little that has not already been written and read about this octogenarian Irish dramatist and critic, whose plays have frequently been more popular in America than in England. Known throughout the world for his piercing wit, his biting sarcasm, his intellectual rather than emotional writing approach, and his flawless literary style, Shaw is today perhaps the greatest living playwright.

He was born in Dublin on July 26, 1856, and his early culture was largely musical, and his early interests largely in science. He says: "I come of a Protestant family of true-blue garrison snobs, but before I was ten years of age I got into an atmosphere of freedom of thought, of anarchic revolt against conventional assumptions of all kinds. . . . I was forbidden nothing and spared nothing. . . . My mother, brought up with merciless strictness. . . . had such a horror of her own training that she left her children without any training at all".

Shaw left school at fourteen to work in the office of a Dublin land agent. In 1876 Shaw went to London, where he worked for a time in the Edison Telephone Company. He wrote all his novels between 1879 and 1883, when he was still in his twenties. These included: "The

Irrational Knot", "Cashel Byron's Profession", "An Unsocial Socialist", and "Love Among the Artists". In 1884, Shaw became a member of the Fabian Society, an organization for the advancement of Socialism. Six pounds was the extent of his literary earnings during his first nine poverty-stricken years in London. From 1888 to 1898 Shaw served first as music critic and then as drama critic for the *Star*, the *World*, and the *Saturday Review*. He wrote, on the completion of his ten years as a critic, "For ten years past, with an unprecedented pertinacity I have been dinning into the public head that I am an extraordinarily witty, brilliant, and clever man. That is now part of the public opinion of England; and no power on earth will ever change it. I may dodder and dote. I may pot-boil and platitudinize; I may become the butt and chopping-block of all the bright, original spirits of the rising generation; but my reputation shall not suffer; it is built up fast and solid, like Shakespeare's, on an impregnable basis of dogmatic reiteration".

During his career as a critic, Shaw had taken to writing plays, the better to proclaim his opinions and to make money quickly. In 1892 his first play, "Widowers' Houses" was produced. Since then have followed a series of brilliant, witty, discursive dramas from the pen of this highly individualistic and fearless playwright, some of them thoroughly dramatic, all of them interesting and peerlessly written. By the turn of the century Shaw's dramas, nearly all of which supported unpopular opinions and ridiculed customary conventions, professions, and practices such as doctors, marriage, vaccination, military men, snobbery, politicians, and modesty, had, surprisingly enough, become exceedingly popular, attracting the patronage of the very people on whose toes they treaded.

A vegetarian, Shaw neither drinks nor smokes. His

tall, thin, angular figure, bald head, and white beard have become familiar to all Americans through his published portraits in the daily newspapers. At the age of eighty-two he is still a vigorous, vital thinker, a biting wit, a fearless critic.

In 1925 Shaw was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature. Perhaps the best known among his many great plays (which, incidentally, have served as vehicles for most of America and England's finest actors of the last four decades) are: "Arms and the Man", "Candida", "The Devil's Disciple", "Caesar and Cleopatra", "Man and Superman", "Major Barbara", "Pygmalion", "Back to Methuselah", "Saint Joan", and "The Apple Cart".

"Back to Methuselah", one of the most serious of Shaw's works, consists of five plays which contain the essence of Shaw's religious and philosophical attitude toward life. He feels that in our present civilization we spend so much time in preparation, and have so little time left for work before our powers begin to decay, that the goal for which mankind should strive is the development of a longer-lived race—a "Back to Methuselah" idea—so that we may live indefinitely, in a world where matter is unimportant and thought is all-important. Believing that this theory of creative evolution is entirely possible through man's own efforts, he devises new legends to sustain, and traces the development of man from the days of the Garden of Eden to the year 31920 A.D. Shaw has made his own adaptation of this play for radio.



Oliver Cromwell

By *John Drinkwater*. Written in 1921.

Number XXVI.

ONE of the favorite subjects for playwrights since time immemorial has always been the lives of characters from history. But curiously enough the leading playwrights of the last few decades produced few great historical dramas until an Englishman, John Drinkwater, achieved his greatest triumph by writing the dramatic biography of an American president; and an American, Maxwell Anderson, achieved his greatest triumph by writing the dramatic biography of an English queen.

While Galsworthy and Shaw were busying themselves chiefly with social problems (although we must not forget Shaw's magnificently moving "Saint Joan", and his finely satiric "Caesar and Cleopatra"), Drinkwater turned to the great figures of history for his dramatic material. His play about Lincoln still stands as one of the greatest portraits of, and finest tributes to, the martyred president. His other biographies, though not as well known, are highly regarded, and are written with the same simple eloquence, dramatic restraint, and careful choice of detail as "Lincoln".

John Drinkwater was born June 1, 1882, and sent at the age of nine to the High School at Oxford, where he remained for six years. "I cannot remember", he writes, "that I took any particular interest in anything in the class-rooms, or that anybody took any particular interest in me. But I acquired an enthusiasm for games which I have never lost. . . . But in school, so far as my credit to the masters was concerned, I was a total loss. I once got

a form prize; but as I had stayed in the form two years over my time, they couldn't help giving it to me. I also, quite unaccountably, got a chemistry prize. How that could have happened I cannot conceive".

While Drinkwater was still very young, his father, in an effort to develop any latent business ability his son might possess, put him to work in an insurance office; and although John stuck it out for twelve years, his heart was never in his work. Books were his chief interest, acting his immediate ambition, and in 1903, when he was only twenty-one, he published his first book, "Poems". In 1906 this was followed by another collection of verse, "The Death of Leander". That Drinkwater had no false illusions about the excellence of these early efforts is proved by his calling them "two books of unbelievably bad verse, which I have been trying to escape ever since; though I might have spared myself anxiety, as, happily, no one ever took any notice of them".

Drinkwater's real theatrical career began in 1907 when he met Barry Jackson in Birmingham and formed with him and some other kindred spirits the Pilgrim Players, an amateur society devoted to producing as well as writing plays. "Cophetua", Drinkwater's first play, was acted here in 1911. By 1913 the Pilgrim Players had shown such progress that Barry Jackson built the Birmingham Repertory Theatre, and Drinkwater gave up his disagreeable business career to become manager of this Theatre. It was here that his magnificent "Abraham Lincoln" was produced in 1918, and Drinkwater's success was assured.

A remarkably prolific writer, Drinkwater's writings in addition to his plays and poems include critical prose, miscellaneous papers, and several biographies. Among the latter we find "The Life of Carl Laemmle", the motion picture producer, which he wrote in 1931.

But Drinkwater is probably best remembered for his

plays about historical figures, which include, besides "Abraham Lincoln": "Mary Stuart", 1921; "Oliver Cromwell", 1921; "Robert E. Lee", 1923; "Robert Burns", 1925.

Drinkwater is recognized as a poetic dramatist of distinction. Perhaps his best non-historical play is his comedy "Bird in Hand" which was a great popular success in New York and London. His distinguished career was cut short by his untimely death in March, 1937.

In "Oliver Cromwell" Drinkwater traces the motives of the great Puritan leader for overthrowing King Charles I and securing control of the English government. He shows the injustices and cruelties which the King constantly imposed on his subjects who displeased or disagreed with him, and how finally Cromwell and a group of kindred spirits determine that these injustices must be stopped, and England made a free and tolerant country. In particular, Cromwell is fighting for freedom of thought and of worship. He has no desire to dethrone the King, but only to force him to be a better ruler. When Cromwell's forces have won their battle against the King's men, Cromwell is still anxious to keep Charles on the throne. But the King is even then plotting against his own people, and Cromwell has no recourse but to let him die. Always he appeals to God for guidance: "I have said a word for freedom", he cries, "a poor, confused word. It was all I could reach to. We are frail, with our passions. We are beset. Thou hast made me, though very unworthy, a mean instrument to do the people some good, and Thee service".



The White-Headed Boy

By *Lennox Robinson*. Produced in 1920.

Number XXVII.

THE name of Lennox Robinson is inseparably linked with the name of the Abbey Theatre, which was the cradle of his genius when he was young, and which was guided by his leadership in later years. The Irish national theatre like the Irish national government found its birth in the passionate idealism of the Irish, and in their equally passionate desire for freedom and self-expression. Professor Allardyce Nicoll describing its beginnings in his "British Drama" says: "Starting as the Irish Literary Theatre in 1899, the little band of enthusiasts who were determined to make the Irish drama a thing of high culture and of European repute soon moved (in 1903) . . . to the Abbey Theatre, forming there a centre of art such as we have not had in the whole of England. Here Mr. Yeats and Synge and Lady Gregory gathered about them a number of gifted authors; here flamed a torchlight of artistic excellence which became the model and the despair of many a writer across the Irish Sea. . . . The imaginative idealism which has always characterized the Celtic races, that love of passionate and dreamy poetry, that only half-ashamed belief in the fairy world, the People of the Mist, all gave a particular tone to the plays produced at the Abbey Theatre."

Lennox Robinson, born at Douglas, Cork, in Ireland, on October 4, 1886, was the youngest son in a family of four sons and one daughter. His father was the Reverend A. C. Robinson, a teacher and theologian. Lennox was rather delicate as a child, thin, solemn, and inclined to pastimes less rough than children's games. But he grew

to great height as a man (six feet six inches), slight and dark in appearance, with thick curly hair. His interest in literature was already evident at the age of ten when he began to write for a small magazine that he edited. He was only twenty-two when "The Clancy Name", a one-act tragedy and his first play, was produced in October, 1908. Although overly melodramatic, and burdened with other defects, this play gave evidence of the future promise of this new young writer. His second play, "The Cross Roads", was produced in 1909, and in 1910 he was asked to become stage manager for the Abbey Theatre in Dublin. He remained in this position until 1914, and held it again from 1919 to 1923, when he became director of the Abbey Theatre.

Robinson's ideal of a national theatre has dominated the life which he has devoted to it; but he has found time too for other activities. From 1915 to 1925 he was an organizing librarian of the Carnegie Trust, working to build up libraries in Ireland's rural districts. In 1918 he joined with William Butler Yeats, Ernest Boyd and James Stephens to establish the Dublin Drama League, the purpose of which was to produce plays not suitable for the scope of the Abbey Theatre. He wrote on dramatic topics for the London Observer in 1924. On his frequent visits to America, he has lectured in the large cities of the United States, and has both offered courses and directed plays at our universities.

Robinson's unbounded enthusiasm for the national theatre which he directs is conveyed in these words of his: "Small as we are, we are, in every sense of the word, a national theatre. Something can be seen at its best in Dublin and nowhere else in the world, and every summer an increasing number of visitors cross the Atlantic or the Irish Sea for the sole purpose of seeing our work in its home surroundings. Haven't we behind us a tradition

of years of willing, unpaid service on the part of directors and players and playwrights, a knowledge that the work of our theatre has played no small part in the creation of our state?" And he has this to say of the Abbey Theatre itself: "It is small and inconvenient. It seats 550 people, and I cannot swear that all of them have a good view of the stage. The stage itself is a mere pocket handkerchief, 16 feet deep and 19 feet wide, but that stage has been the cradle of many a masterpiece and has been the training ground for many a player of genius."

That the Abbey Theatre players are truly actors of genius has been proved to America in the several visits they have made this country in their repertory of Irish plays. Each time they have astounded us with the perfection of their art, and have been received with the greatest acclaim.

Robinson's plays may be divided into two categories: those which have to do with Irish life in small rural communities, and those concerned with Irish politics. Examples of the first category are: "The Clancy Name", "The Cross Roads", "Harvest", and "The White-Headed Boy", the latter his most successful play. Examples of the second category are "Patriots", "The Dreamers", and "The Lost Leader", the latter about Charles Parnell.

In addition to his plays, Robinson has written a novel, "A Young Man from the South", two volumes of short stories, a biography, and an essay.

"The White-Headed Boy" is a comedy of middle-class domestic life. Youngest of six children, and the favorite of his mother, Denis Geoghegan is the "white-headed boy" of the Geoghegan family. The others are always making sacrifices for his welfare and advancement. They want Denis to be a doctor, and to marry Delia Duffy, the village belle; but they finally rebel when

he keeps failing in his examinations at Trinity College. They decide to send Denis to Canada and let him shift for himself. He is brought home, but before he can leave again, the Duffys interfere, insisting that Denis fulfill his promise to marry Delia, or they will bring action against him for breach of promise. To solve this predicament, Denis promptly marries Delia, and goes to work at home as a street laborer. This is such a blow to the pride of the Geoghegans and Duffys that they are willing to give Denis anything he wants, in exchange for his promise not to disgrace them. They find him a fine position, and the play leaves him triumphant, still the "white-headed boy".



Elizabeth the Queen

By *Maxwell Anderson*. Produced Nov. 3,
1930. Number XXVIII.

ON the evening of November 3, 1930, Maxwell Anderson's "Elizabeth the Queen" blazed its way across our theatrical heavens, and heralded the return to our drama of the poetic playwright. Not poetic in the old sense of the word, but a new modern vivid poetic prose was the contribution of Mr. Anderson to this drama—a contribution which many of the critics failed fully to appreciate on the following morning, but which caused Mr. Brooks Atkinson in his New York Times review to exclaim happily: "If Maxwell Anderson had made use of the theatre's artful tricks in 'Elizabeth the Queen', which was acted at the Guild Theatre last evening, he might have written a showier play. But he could hardly have written the magnificent drama he has set down quietly on his own well-considered terms. It is a searching portrayal of character, freely imaginative in its use history, clearly thought out, and conveyed in dialogue of notable beauty. It is a drama of a dangerous love between a shrewish Queen and an ambitious young Lord Essex. Mr. Anderson has written it with the candor of an independent thinker who can say a wise thing as unobtusely as he can make a glowing human statement. . . . Without a suspicion of iconoclasm, Mr. Anderson has portrayed Elizabeth as a woman, stormy of temperament, torn between natural tenderness and the brutality of office, sharp of tongue, quick-witted, decisive and wise. She can curse like a fishmonger's wife. She is blunt and precise in her State judgment. As personal fortunes turn against her she faces the world with bitter fortitude. And Essex is

mettle worthy of a queen—audacious, proud with a great capacity for anger. Without thumbing the pages of old books for suitable anachronisms, Mr. Anderson has written of these two people in prose that has pith and resiliency. He is not mannered; he is forthright. Between such folk there is no idle bandying of words”.

In Elizabeth and Essex, Lynn Fontanne and Alfred Lunt found two parts which added to their dramatic stature, and in which they each scored personal triumphs.

Mr. Anderson's firm belief that our drama can be great only insofar as the language of our plays is realistically exalted and eloquent, and vividly real and beautiful, has inspired many of younger dramatists to turn to forms of poetic prose the better to express their ideas in terms of the theatre. Mr. Anderson does not advocate a return to Shakespearean poetry, but to the Shakespearean ideal; that dramatic language be real, but not commonplace; exalted, but not exaggerated. He has carried out this ideal in the majority of his later plays, and with particular success in "Winterset", "Mary of Scotland", and "High Tor". He states his attitude in his "A Prelude to Poetry in the Theatre" when he says: "I believe with Goethe that dramatic poetry is man's greatest achievement on his earth so far, and I believe with the early Bernard Shaw that the theatre is essentially a cathedral of the spirit, devoted to the exaltation of men, and boasting an apostolic succession of inspired high priests which extends further into the past than the Christian line founded by St. Peter. . . . Our modern dramatists . . . are not poets, and the best prose in the world is inferior on the stage to the best poetry. It is the fashion, I know, to say that poetry is a matter of content and emotion, not of form, but this is said in an age of prose by prose writers who have not studied the effect of form on content or who

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